

PAUL
LAFFOLEY

RELEVANT
TO
THE
SUBJECT

T H E
P H E N O M E N O L O G Y
..... *of*
R E V E L A T I O N

BY PAUL LAFFOLEY

Milwaukee Art Museum
750 N. Lincoln Memorial Dr.
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202

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BY PAUL LAFFOLEY

Edited by Jeanne Marie Wasilik

K E N T

709.04
hall
1989

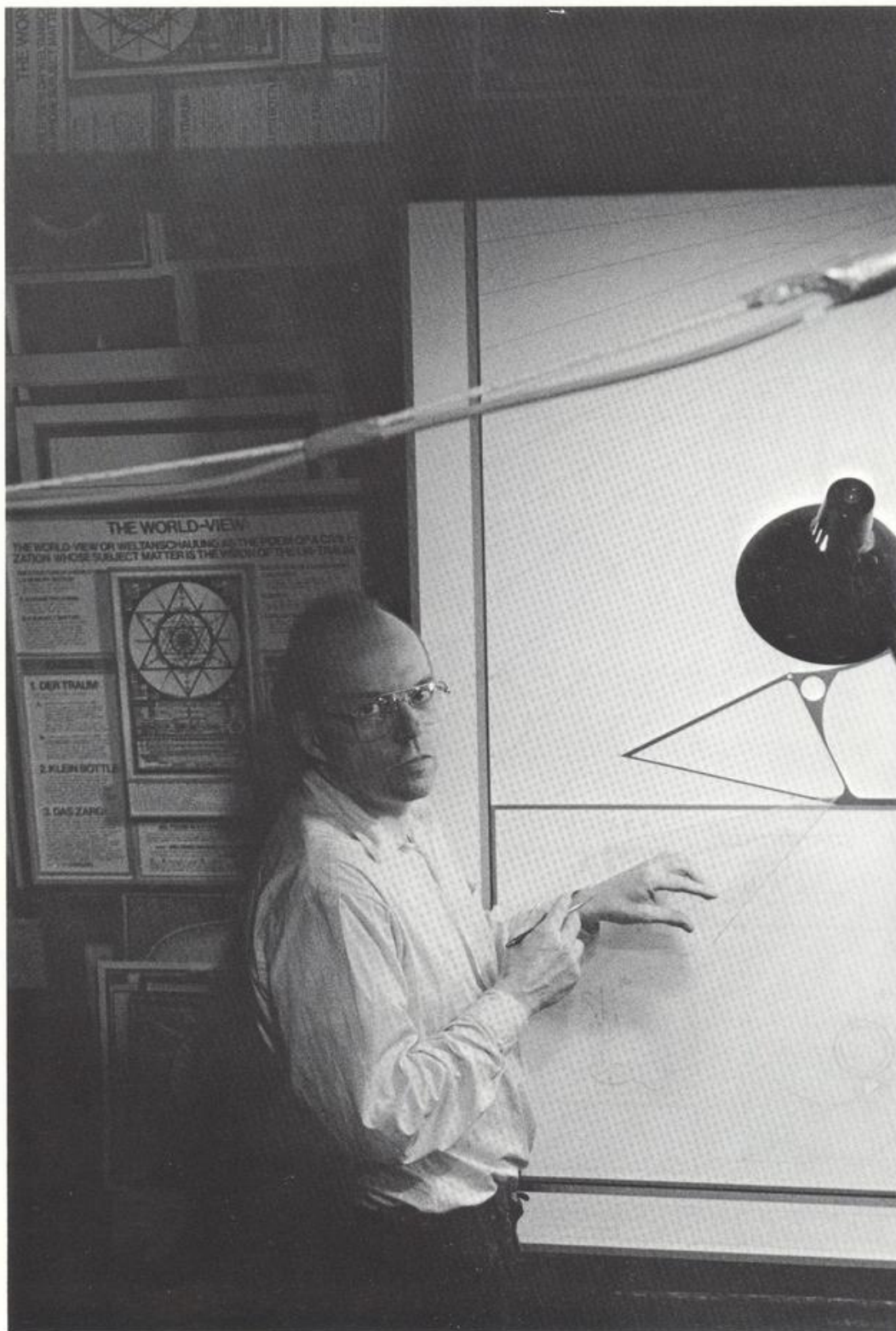


Photo: Joanna Soltan

10-19-89

I, ROBUR MASTER OF THE WORLD

1968

Oil, acrylic, ink, and lettering on canvas

73½ × 73½ in.

186.5 × 186.5 cm

Collection Peter C. Du Bois, New York

Subject: Redesigning Part of the Solar System

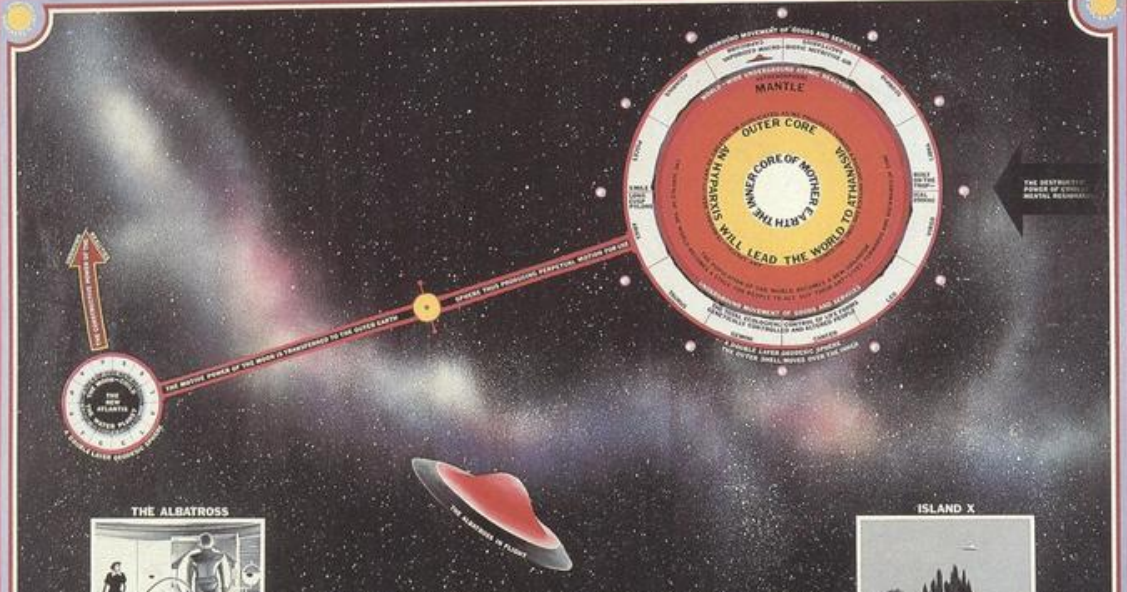
Symbol Evocation: The Natural Link Between the Earth and the Moon

Comments: As we approach the twenty-first century, problems of managing the world seem to be emerging faster than we are able to solve them. Driven close to despair and distraction, architects and designers of the environment in general have become either *bricoleurs* frantically trying to patch our reality as it comes apart at the seams, or prophets of doom traumatized by their own forebodings. As in all problem solving, the solution lies first in determining the next highest context of the elements involved, and second in assessing the new possibilities that then appear. In the case of the earth, the next design context is the solar system, specifically our nearest neighbor both physically and mythologically—the moon. I propose, therefore, an earth-moon link-up through open space to form a simple but gigantic motor. It would consist of double-layered geodesic spheres that rotate one within the other about ten miles off the surface of the earth and the moon. These friction machines could be constructed of a transparent living plastic and would be linked through space by a tube of the same material. The choice of a living material would mean that repairs would be self-generated and instantaneous. The orbit of the moon would drive the motor and provide all the energy we would ever need. The sphere itself could support an atomic train, able to stop at any point above the earth's surface and lower shipments; thus the time needed to distribute goods and services would be minimized. Filtering systems could be installed in the sphere to both clean the air and reclaim lost minerals, or even to add nutrients to the atmosphere.

Next all vegetation around the world would be united into one giant plant, made to grow through the link tube and finally around the moon so that a natural human-sustaining atmosphere would develop there. All buildings and instrumentality would be physically alive. Violent or explosive actions and effects would be time delayed and slowed to the rate of human observation. Finally would come the building of a flying saucer city—a new acropolis, the Urban Fossickated Octave. It would be a physically transformative environment circulating the earth and would take those on board who wished to transit from the exoteric realm of knowledge to the mesoteric and through to the esoteric realm.

I, ROBUR MASTER OF THE WORLD

YOU MUST OBEY ME FOR ONLY I CAN SAVE THE WORLD



THE ALBATROSS

ROBUR MASTER OF THE WORLD OBSERVES THE WORLD



THE ALBATROSS IS FLIGHT



ISLAND X

LEAVING THE MOON MASTER'S APPROACH

THE UNITED TRANSFORMATION OF PEOPLE IN ACTION NOW DOOM...

I ROBUR MASTER OF THE WORLD PRESENT THE ARCHITECTURE OF TRANSFORMATION AS THE SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM OF A WORLD FACED WITH CONTINUOUS CHANGE AND THE GROWING POSSIBILITY OF ULTIMATE DOOM. I HAVE UTILIZED THE FANTASIES OF THE VISIONARY BORED, INFANTILE, INSANE, FANATICAL AGGRESSIVELY IGNORANT HYPER-CRITICAL DISENCHANTED ONES.

I HAVE CREATED MYSELF

THEREFORE, IF YOU DISOBEY ME I MERELY CAUSE MYSELF NEVER TO HAVE EXISTED SO THEN YOU CANNOT HAVE DISOBEYED ME.



THE MOON-LINK

BY A RECIPROCAL TRANSFER OF POWER FROM THE MOON TO THE EARTH BY THE MOVEMENT OF THE SHELLS AND THE MAINTENANCE OF THE MOON'S ORBITAL VELOCITY BY ELECTRONICS THE WORK OF MANKIND AS PURE SURVIVAL IS ELIMINATED



LIVING STRUCTURES

IN OUR AGE OF DESPERATE SENTIMENTALITY WHAT COULD BE SO NATURAL AS THE USE OF GENETICALLY PROGRAMMED CREATURES, THUS MAKING OUR DESIGNED ENVIRONMENT A TRUE LEARNING EXPERIENCE WITH ITS RISKY EMOTIONAL GIVE AND TAKE.



THE URBAN FOSSICKED OCTAVE

A FLYING CITY CONTRASTING THE WORLDScape WHICH CONTAINS PHYSICALLY AND CONCEPTUALLY ALTERABLE ENVIRONMENTS ON A DAILY MONTHLY AND YEARLY CYCLE BECOMES THE NEW ACROPO-LIS, THE COMPLETE INTEGRATION OF ALL KNOWLEDGE.



SPACE ISLANDS

THE KEEPER OF THE CUSP IS AN ISLAND BOTH PHYSICALLY AND CONCEPTUALLY IT IS HERE THE DYNAMIC CHARACTER OF THIS UTOPIA IS MAINTAINED BY ALLOWING TOTALLY ALIEN MICRO-WORLDS TO DEVELOP PROVIDING NEW INFORMATION AND CULTURES.

DEDICATED TO THE ULTIMATE ELIMINATION OF STABILITY

HOMAGE TO POE, VERNE, WELLS AND MARCUSE

THE RETURN OF ROBUR

"MY LIFE BECOMES INCREASINGLY COMPLEX" LE CORBUSIER 1928

The Thon's gaze seemed to clamp calipers on the abbot's cranium and measure it six ways. He smiled doubtfully.

"You'd like me to explain our work in the simplest possible language?"

"Something like that, if it's possible."

"That's just it." He laughed. "The untrained man reads a paper on natural science and thinks, 'Now why couldn't he explain this in simple language?' He can't seem to realize that what he tried to read was the simplest possible language—for that subject matter. In fact, a great deal of natural philosophy is simply a process of linguistic simplification—an effort to invent languages in which half a page of equations can express an idea which could not be stated in less than a thousand pages of so-called 'simple' language. Do I make myself clear?"

"I think so . . ."

—Walter Miller, Jr., *A Canticle for Leibowitz*

Paul Laffoley . . .

They wear well.

Fifteen years of morning suns have ripped through my window. After a carom shot off a suitably reflective all-white Ryman and a mellowing bounce off a gray is-it-or-isn't-it Artschwager, the sunbeam burrows into a Laffoley causing its colors to yell, "Wake Up! Wake Up! Life is full of joys and mysteries yet unsolved."

The picture then goes on to say: "Sadly I will outlive you. It is for others to work my riddle. In the fullness of time, concepts which I portend will unfurl and become clear, and in the FULL-fullness of time, may even become part of the mechanism of life itself."

Is this not the task of masterwork, to remain an unworked riddle? Pictures which have

yielded up their secrets too easily lie scattered like flaccid condoms on the Jones Beach of Fashion. I assure you, after fifteen years of daily scrutiny, the Laffoleys are still going strong.

By creating paintings which abound in English Language Text, Paul sets out on a burdensome task. Everybody's a critic. "I know what I like," etc., etc., etc. In the case of the "painted painting" the viewer confronts, soaks in, swirls the picture around on the tongue of his mind, and then responds with no need for "understanding" the picture. Certainly no more than you need to "understand" how a carburetor works to drive around in your car.

However, because they are laced with text, and everybody who reads English presumes to be as smart as the next guy, when you "read" a Laffoley, you are confronted by the blistering fact that you aren't as smart as the next guy. And it can be very disquieting.

I have seen it a hundred times: friends, handypeople, scholars, bookkeepers, critics, the gamut, who see a Laffoley for the first time, all feel awed and "embarrassed" by seeing a beautiful thing whose beauty is rhapsodic and immediate, but EVEN THOUGH THEY CAN READ IT, THEY CANNOT UNDERSTAND IT.

Leonardo da Vinci may have dealt with the market place better by putting his *Mona Lisa* in one place and his *Codex Atlanticus* in another. Ditto Marcel Duchamp, who put the notes to the *Large Glass* in the *Green Box* and testified that the notes were to be considered a vital and integral part of the work, but look at one, and read the other. Smart moves, by smart men.

With Paul, you get the whole shebang on one surface.

I always wonder, what the reaction to Laffoley by a non-speaker of English would be. Would they simply take it as a Thing-As-Such and pay no more mind to the text than I (who do not speak French) do to the *jour . . .*'s, etc., that continually pop up in Cubist still lifes.

(Technically this would be almost impossible for me to positively ascertain, because if a person could read this conjecture, in English, she would be disqualified a priori from telling me her reaction.)

I do have another theory: as literacy in the U.S. continues to decay, the textual component of the Laffoley picture will recede and recede as it becomes ever more difficult to grasp by legions of people. Then, assuming they don't worship it or destroy it, it will take on a sort of Rosetta-stone quality. And the Laffoley will simply be viewed with awe alongside such "immediate" works as Rothkos or Monet H_2O Lilies.

Paul the man, whom it has been a pleasure to know for fifteen years, is a truly sweet, nice man. All he does is paint.

In fact, he once told me that he has an inventory of pictures stacked in his mind, already painted, circling like planes over Newark, simply waiting their turn to get realized. They are already completed before he starts them.

My philosophy as a collector has always been straightforward: art is what hangs on a nail. I have great respect for, but no desire to own, people like Smithson, LeWitt, Beuys, etc. I like Paintings, Good Ole Paintings that flow down the deep middle of the river of Western tradition. Paul is right there in the white water.

In fact, my very, very first reaction to the pictures was that the text was a pastiche, sort

of like a Schwitters which had been made from the wastebasket of a mad scientist. I thought, "He's kidding," but it doesn't matter because the picture cannot be walked away from. Just like when you see Mondrian's *Broadway Boogie Woogie*, or *Hide and Seek* by Tchelitchev, or the *Blue Poles*, you have SEEN them, you can never Un-see them after that point. You can say you don't fancy them, but you can never forget the experience of seeing them.

Such a brick hit me in the head in 1974 when I went into a little co-op gallery in Soho to buy a novel-looking picture frame they had in the window.

In progress was a "wine and cheese." (Two wines and cheeses actually, in that two separate co-op openings were happening concurrently.) I looked at these pictures and felt the bash in the head that can only come from one and only one source on the planet. There is no high like it.

SEEING-STONE-GENIUS-ONCE-IN-A-DECADE-MUSEUM-QUALITY-STUFF-OF-DREAMS-PAINTING-AT-A-PRICE-I-COULD-JUST-ABOUT-AFFORD-TO-PAY.

If you, gentle reader, have felt this, then you KNOW what I am talking about.

I was going into the hospital the next day for some kind of ectomy and my mind wasn't wholly there so I actually left without buying the picture.

But I assure you, the very first thing I did when I awoke from the anesthesia was to call from the hospital and tell them it was a done deal.

What is an essay without a footnote? So I quote Clement Greenberg who said RE art in general:

A great work of art is the result of an interaction between the artist and his age

*whereby the personality of one and the content of the other receive their most appropriate, most spiritualized or "ideal" expression and thus touch, by a kind of dialectical process, that which is profoundly common to all humanity in all ages. Pigment, canvas, stone, bronze are resolved into forms that belong purely to the human consciousness. Who can disagree?*¹

But for the qualification that Laffoley's head is in an age which the rest of us haven't reached yet, I think this is a pretty apt description of his work.

He is the spokespainter of consciousness yet unborn.

Paul the Person. I would characterize him as likable, mild-mannered, given to discourse, unegotistical, dedicated (that's pretty obvious), learned (expelled from the Harvard Graduate School of Design for conceptual deviance), determined (dogged Frederick Kiesler and became his apprentice), and kind.

It's funny, but after being around him for a time (and I have hours of tapes which I suppose will someday be subject to scholarly review), you learn to be careful of posing even the most innocent conjecture to Paul. Even something simple like "What time is it?" can get you a reasoned analysis taking many minutes RE: "What time it IS versus other types of time it MIGHT BE."

You'd like Laffoley. He has not the furrowed brow and the intense dangling Lucky Strike of Pollock; nor the Ursa Major quality of Andre or Oldenburg; nor the weird quality of Warhol. He's cast more in the Lichtensteinian mold. A nice dedicated guy.

He has the same troubles we all have: paying the rent, mercurial girlfriend, sadness over the loss of members of his family . . . , but one problem he doesn't have is a sense of purpose.

1. Clement Greenberg, *Arrogant Purpose*, vol. 2 (originally published in the New York Times Book Review, 1947).

TEMPORALITY

1974

Oil, acrylic, ink, and lettering on canvas

73½ × 73½ in.

186.5 × 186.5 cm

Subject: The Nature of Temporality

Symbol Evocation: The Geometry of Change

Comments: Most of the geometries (earth measures) that attempt to model the reaction of human consciousness to nature only deal effectively with spatiality. No aspect of temporality was ever properly described by a geometry until the mid-nineteenth century, and we are only now beginning to be able to express the nature of temporality by geometry. Before the nineteenth century, the line or the circle was used to depict Time both in the West and East. Eternity was essentially left a geometric blank, and any dimensions of temporality below Time were simply not considered. Occasionally someone might have used a spiral to attempt to join the intuitions of the line and the circle, but overall the rigidity of these spatially-based forms of geometry have always found temporality—in essence, change—too elusive.

By 1850 a new branch of mathematics had surfaced known as topology, concerned with those properties of geometric configuration (point sets) that are unaltered by elastic deformations (such as stretching or twisting); points are homeomorphic, remaining the same regardless of changes in configuration. Since points were all that remained of classical geometry in topology, temporality finally had its geometry. A point is unperceivable and inconceivable, thus it can represent an instant of time.

I have used topology's most complex form, named after its inventor, the mathematician Felix Klein (1849-1925). A Klein bottle is a one-sided topological surface that appears to enclose space but in reality has no inside or outside. Since it does not model space in the conventional sense I have found that it can map temporal notions of change like Goethe's *zeitgeist* (time spirit), the *kairos* (the teleology of the moment of crisis), and other aspects of temporality, which I am continuing to research.

THE STRIVING AFTER BEING BY BECOMING



THE POTENTIAL OF
BEING
1 WITHIN-TIMENESS
2 IN-THE-WORLD
3 A-WHOLE
4 TOWARDS-DEATH

HOMAGE TO GOETHE WATTS, ELIADE, HEIDEGGER, DAVIES, KOZYREV, DUNNE, GURDJIEFF

The DREAM

AS THE INITIATION

This concerns a dream that I had in July of 1961. Perhaps a little background on what happened would be helpful. I had just finished about a year of weekly sessions with a psychiatrist, who had treated me for a mild state of catatonia. During the last two months I had been given eight electric shock treatments. At that time shock treatments were administered by two electrodes, attached to either side of the head, that delivered ninety volts of direct current across the frontal lobe. During the treatment, which lasted a half hour, the patient was anesthetized with ether. I was told that electric shock therapy induces a profound sleep, a sleep that cannot be obtained naturally or with anesthetics, and that through this deep rest it is possible to reach unplumbed energy levels in the mind. I think this is similar to a kind of treatment that is practiced in Denmark, in which the patient is put to sleep for a week under circumstances less dangerous than with electric shock therapy.

As I remember, it was a couple of months after the shock treatments that this dream came to pass. Up to this time in my life my dreams had always been mostly in black and white, and only sporadically in color. After the shock treatments I began to dream only in color—extremely vivid color. I began to like my dreams because of their color. I also felt that I was able somehow to participate in the action of these dreams. This was before interest in dream research, with its emphasis on so-called lucid or veridical dreaming, became as popular as it is today. In the state of veridical dreaming you come to know that you are dreaming and learn how to work with your dreams in the dream state. Today this area of study has generated a great deal of literature and many instruction manuals, both scientific and occult in nature.

My veridical dream happened spontaneously. My will became part of the action, although not totally and not right away. In the beginning of the dream I still had that sense of suspension that is so characteristic of dreams, but not for long. I went from a sense of suspended will to a feeling that I was in full control of my will, and finally reached a state in which my volitional nature was totally eliminated and I became almost a victim of the dream.

The dream began simply. I was on my way to visit an art gallery in Boston on a bright summer day. It was probably about 1:30 in the afternoon and I was on Arlington Street, looking up Newbury Street. At that time I was living in Belmont, a suburb of Boston. Every Saturday I would religiously go in to Boston to see the exhibits on Newbury Street. The Alpha Gallery was around then, as were the Ward Nasse and the Boris Mirski across from it. I started walking up past the Ritz Carlton with no sense of how I had got there but with a sense of anticipation of what

I would soon see. This first part of the dream was not veridical; I was just moving from one gallery to another, looking at shows of work that was fashionable in Boston at the time. During the early sixties Boston was just beginning to catch up with cultural centers like New York, and as I walked around in my dream I had yet to see anything new.

Suddenly, however, I began to realize that I was dreaming, and with that realization the streets began to alter. Newbury Street had new shops that I knew did not exist in my waking state. A sense of wonder and curiosity overcame me as I began to investigate this new environment. When I came to the Alpha Gallery I saw that there was a gallery right next door called the Omega. I burst out with, "Wow! I never noticed this gallery before. I know it doesn't really exist, but there it is." I thought maybe I should go in. I took the front stairs with what seemed like a long, slow ballet leap. The doorway was a little strange; it seemed to be somewhat iridescent. (In dream analysis there exists the notion of the portaling experience, which is considered to be connected with the paranormal phenomena of astral projection, or out-of-the-body and near-death experiences. Portaling is said to be like going through a tunnel of gray but iridescent living tissue.) My growing apprehension of the otherworldly was momentarily dissipated when I looked through the portal and saw that there was a large crowd inside. It looked like an ordinary gallery opening, except that the



Lang, *Metropolis*

people seemed to be better dressed than was true at most of the receptions that went on in the area; everyone was formally dressed and notably fashionable. A large person who was obviously the gallery director seemed both ebullient and beneficent as he busied himself moving people from work to work. I felt a little funny, almost diffident, looking in. Nevertheless, in the spirit of Archy and Mehitabel I said, "But wotthehell," and went in.

As I looked around I realized that this was an exhibit of sculpture—but not ordinary sculpture. What I was looking at appeared to be physically alive. The professional futurists had then not yet predicted that someday we will even have machinery that is alive, so the whole idea of art that was physically alive was uncanny and alienating. I thought the least we could ask of a piece of sculpture (paraphrasing Salvador Dali) is that it does not breathe. But here were things that were

Laffoley, *Thanatokline*, detail

HYPNOS

1/2 = (7/4)

DREAMS:

1. DREAMS ARE THE CHILDREN OF THE NIGHT AND BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF THE DEATH AND THE SLEEP.
 2. THE DREAMS OF MORPHEUS APPEAR ONLY IN HUMAN FORMS.
 3. THE DREAMS OF IKELOS OR PHOBETOR APPEAR ONLY IN ANIMAL FORM.
 4. THE DREAMS OF PHANTASOS APPEAR ONLY AS INANIMATE OBJECTS.
- THANATONEIROMANCY IS THE STUDY OF DEATH BY DREAMS.

They seemed even more alive than my vision of aliveness, and compared with my vision of maturity they had, if you can imagine it, a super-maturity.

vibrant, and even more alive—if that is possible to imagine—than the people who were wandering around looking at them. I tried to get the attention of the people around me but they ignored me as if I were a ghost. The gallery director was a little more communicative. He said, “Get away! What are you doing here?”

This reproach checked any further attempts at conversation on my part. I watched with total detachment as small groups exchanged banal pleasantries and avoided any interaction with the sculptures. In the end I was left with myself, my perceptions, and my reactions to this unusual art. As it began to sink in just how new these sculptures were, I was seized with an overwhelming emotion. My first reaction was a complete jealousy. Now, I normally do not feel jealous when I look at other contemporary artists’ work. I may be bored, perhaps slightly interested, but not jealous. But here I was, hysterically jealous. Enraged, I stewed, “Everything in this show has totally wiped me out! I’ve been absorbed. All the forms I’ve been thinking about or could think about for years and years to come are expressed in this work. I couldn’t even catch up with this work, let alone hope to achieve the next logical or formal steps.”

The sculptures were horrible—not because they looked like something out of a horror film, but because they were inexorably alive. We all develop a vision of aliveness when we observe or interact with the organic world, and everyone has a vision of maturity no matter what age they are. To talk of something beyond the limits of those visions sounds paradoxical, and yet this is the only way I can describe what I sensed in the sculptures. They seemed even more alive than my vision of aliveness, and compared with my vision of maturity they had, if you can imagine it, a supermaturity. It seemed

possible that they were not life forms at all, but some other modality of being. I will not even use the term alien life form to describe them because that would imply that they could have communicated with me, even if only to express their alienness.

There were exactly thirteen works in the dream exhibit. They were displayed on pedestals shaped like Ionic columns, giving the show a kind of surreal aura that became even stronger when I attempted to touch them. They seemed to recede as my finger approached their surfaces. Or was I experiencing something else? The sculptures each occupied about a four-foot cube of space, but they seemed to contain more space than that. There is a visual effect that I and other artists have used that is created by sandwiching a light source between one- and two-way mirrors, which gives the illusion of greater and sometimes infinite internal space within an obviously limited form. The mirror-sandwich effect is diminished when the viewer touches the surface of the glass. But in the case of my dream sculptures this did not happen. My outstretched hand penetrated them like a ghost going through a door or Lewis Carroll’s Alice going through the looking glass. As I probed, my progress inward became more and more difficult. It was as if my hand had entered a powerful and palpable electromagnetic field. Although I continued to see these entities as works of art, I began to realize that they were unbelievably brilliant—both intellectually and visually. They embodied a kind of iridescent scholasticism. In short, they were bodies of light.

Current research on the near-death experience includes many reports of an anthropomorphic, all-wise being. This being is often interpreted in a religious sense as an angel or someone from the realm of death. When the



Cave of the Sibyl, Cuma,
Italy

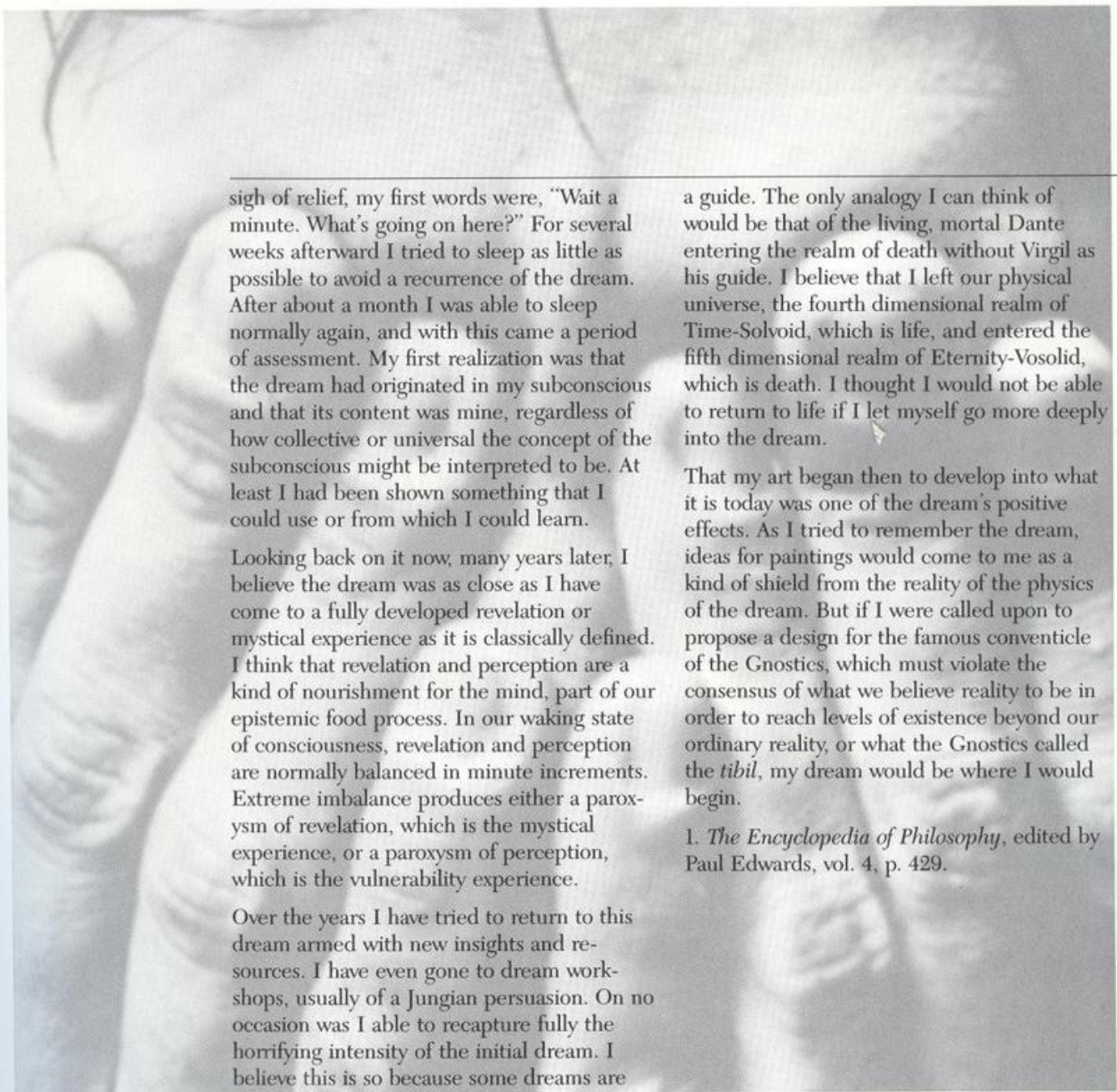
near-death experience is induced through witnessing your own death by astral projection, you move swiftly through a tunnel to emerge at a panorama of the events of your life, presented in a completely nonjudgmental manner. At the end you, are approached by a being, or body of light, who asks if you wish to step across the line into the realm of death. Now that I know about the near-death experience, I have considered the possibility that the dream was a kind of near-death experience with certain variations to accommodate the fact that I am a visual artist. Yet I think there was more to it than that.

By now in my dream I was completely absorbed in the contemplation of one of these sculptures, or bodies of light. I had picked one at random; I do not even know what number it was. I believe it was located near the entryway. Beyond the entry the gallery space opened up into a large round area, so that the floor plan was shaped like a keyhole. The sculpture I had approached was therefore probably the second or third from the doorway. As I began to stare at the entity without moving about, as I had been before, a strange impression came over me that I can only describe now as an actual inversion of the classic epistemic model. In the epistemic model of human knowledge there exist a knower and that which is known, and together they form a mutually interdependent relationship. As a knower, I think of myself as active and of that which I come to know as passive. As I move from one occasion of existence to another, or from one event to another, I feel that I am in control of the situation and that my volitional nature is never exhausted by satisfaction. But as I contemplated the sculpture I felt a deep satisfaction of knowing grow within me. And the longer I stayed with the act of knowing, the greater this feeling of satisfaction be-

came. It seemed to me that I could be satisfied with this single act of knowing for the rest of my life. I would compare the experience to a philosophical encounter with a monad as described by Leibniz. The monad is real but not locally connected. "Since everything that happens anywhere in the physical world has some effect everywhere else, the body belonging to a monad is receiving such effects at every moment and is in correspondence with these effects—although not as a causal consequence of them—in such a way that the monad is able to mirror what is happening everywhere."¹

The sculpture seemed to have an infinite number of sense organs, each as distinct from the other as the eye is from the ear. Suddenly a strange feeling came over me that I had never experienced before. I felt that I had become the knowledge and the sculpture the knower; I was being subsumed, not physically but epistemically. This was not an instance, as in the epistemic model, of two equal conscious beings anticipating each other's anticipation in an indefinite dialogue. It was as if I had become no more than knowledge for the most powerful knower I could imagine. My modality of consciousness seemed mechanical in comparison with that of the sculpture's. Finally I realized the full import of what was happening. I had first been enraged at not being able to communicate with anybody around me. Then I was inflamed with jealousy when I recognized authentically new art. At this last point, alone with the sculpture, I was overcome with terror. I was fully awake: I knew I was trapped in the gallery and would surely die if I did not get out of this dream and out of the presence of these "sculptures." One had got me somehow or other and I had to escape.

That is when I did wake up screaming. My bedclothes were soaked with sweat. After a



sigh of relief, my first words were, "Wait a minute. What's going on here?" For several weeks afterward I tried to sleep as little as possible to avoid a recurrence of the dream. After about a month I was able to sleep normally again, and with this came a period of assessment. My first realization was that the dream had originated in my subconscious and that its content was mine, regardless of how collective or universal the concept of the subconscious might be interpreted to be. At least I had been shown something that I could use or from which I could learn.

Looking back on it now, many years later, I believe the dream was as close as I have come to a fully developed revelation or mystical experience as it is classically defined. I think that revelation and perception are a kind of nourishment for the mind, part of our epistemic food process. In our waking state of consciousness, revelation and perception are normally balanced in minute increments. Extreme imbalance produces either a paroxysm of revelation, which is the mystical experience, or a paroxysm of perception, which is the vulnerability experience.

Over the years I have tried to return to this dream armed with new insights and resources. I have even gone to dream workshops, usually of a Jungian persuasion. On no occasion was I able to recapture fully the horrifying intensity of the initial dream. I believe this is so because some dreams are not simply a process of disguising and distorting repressed impulses, as Freud described them, or steps on Jung's path of individuation, or part of the self-actualization process Maslow described. Sometimes dreams are what they actually appear to be to the dreamer: portals to the supernatural, psychic, or spiritual realms of reality.

To me, this particular dream was a dangerous connection with death without the benefit of

a guide. The only analogy I can think of would be that of the living, mortal Dante entering the realm of death without Virgil as his guide. I believe that I left our physical universe, the fourth dimensional realm of Time-Solvoid, which is life, and entered the fifth dimensional realm of Eternity-Vosolid, which is death. I thought I would not be able to return to life if I let myself go more deeply into the dream.

That my art began then to develop into what it is today was one of the dream's positive effects. As I tried to remember the dream, ideas for paintings would come to me as a kind of shield from the reality of the physics of the dream. But if I were called upon to propose a design for the famous conventicle of the Gnostics, which must violate the consensus of what we believe reality to be in order to reach levels of existence beyond our ordinary reality, or what the Gnostics called the *tibil*, my dream would be where I would begin.

1. *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Paul Edwards, vol. 4, p. 429.

Photo: Davies and Starr

THE LIVING KLEIN BOTTLE HOUSE OF TIME

1978

Oil, acrylic, ink, and lettering on canvas

73½ × 73½ in.

186.5 × 186.5 cm

Collection Norman Dolph, New York

Subject: The Second Design Phase of the Time Machine

Symbol Evocation: The Singularity between the Third and Fourth Dimensions of Spatiality

Comments: The basic change from the first to the second design phase of the time machine is the addition of the Biochron Time-Suit. This entity is an alternative creature that has been genetically programmed to grow in the form of a living Klein bottle.

I believe that to perceive time periods radically dislocated from one's habitual and functional space-time frame, a buffer or early warning system is necessary for protection against possible changes in circumstance and belief. Although the average world-view should take one successfully through an entire lifetime with little adjustment, world-views or universe-views are in fact notoriously fragile entities. For example, if you attempt to process information on the circumstances and beliefs of the world 5,000 years hence, you might well be brought into direct contact with thoughts not only unimaginable but directly destructive to someone in your present. Or imagine if the artifacts of our present civilization were constructed by people from our ancient past, what inevitable havoc would reign unless the ancients had had some way of understanding our present beliefs.

Coupled with the Biochron Time-Suit is a device I call the Agnosticon. The purpose of this device is to allow its user to engineer their doubt or faith processes. In my opinion, it is necessary to engineer doubt and faith in relation to the accelerated space-time frames of reference that would be encountered with the time machine, in order to survive and perceive these unfamiliar world-views. The basis of the Agnosticon is the heptahedron, which is a seven-sided convex polyhedron made from a piezoelectric crystal shaped like an octahedron and electromagnetically charged along its major axes and surfaces. As a structured singularity, the heptahedron is kept isolated from other singularities so that it can function specifically in relation to human beings.

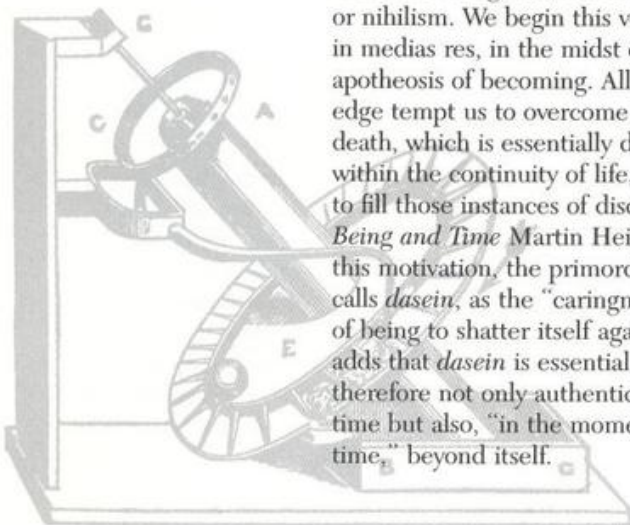
DEATH

The Task

The attempt to join the energy of life with the energy of death is the oldest quest of human engineering. Engineering, here, is meant in its broadest sense: the consciously expressive and skillful manipulation of believed natural processes to aid in the transformation and sublimation of a single human will or collective wills. I mean engineering as *telesis*.

Throughout history human beings have been motivated to create a life-death continuity, whether through art, science, religion, magic, or nihilism. We begin this venture, of course, in *medias res*, in the midst of life that is the apotheosis of becoming. All forms of knowledge tempt us to overcome their aspects of death, which is essentially discontinuity within the continuity of life, by motivating us to fill those instances of discontinuity. In *Being and Time* Martin Heidegger describes this motivation, the primordial impulse he calls *dasein*, as the "caringness" and freedom of being to shatter itself against death. But he adds that *dasein* is essentially futural and therefore not only authentically finite within time but also, "in the moment of vision for its time," beyond itself.

Perpetual motion machine



The history of partial successes and partial failures at eliminating discontinuities leads to a paroxysm of ever-increasing tension and reveals the possibility of the complete convergence of the Octave of Dimensional Spissitude, the physical and metaphysical layering or thickening of energy as it mounts the ladder of the natural dimensions. The location in dimensional spissitude relevant to an examination of life and death is the arena where time and eternity interact and where life and death meet. It is in this arena, which is governed by two mutually recursive concepts, causality and meta-energy, that life and death can be defined in relation to each other, and not merely as in closed and final opposition.

Causality

The history of the study of causality chronicles the attempt to solve the problem of change. Change itself invites us to comprehend it in two ways: as a series of successive states in time that make up the history of any entity and as a means by which to understand how that entity, or systematic unit in time, may have come about. The medieval scholars distinguished between *causa cognoscendi*, or the reason for affirming a truth, and *causa existendi* or *causa fiendi*, or the reason an event occurs. *Causa fiendi* is essentially equivalent to Aristotle's idea of efficient cause and to the term "cause" as it is used in contemporary science.

The eighteenth-century British philosopher David Hume claimed that the necessity and sufficiency of a causal event are not observable. But early in the twentieth century the American philosopher Curt Ducasse declared that *causa fiendi* is a relationship between observable facts and that relationships like constant conjunction, resemblance, and contiguity, although not qualities like colors, smells, or sounds, are facts of perception. It

Life and death are therefore as unlikely to be ontological opposites as they are to be described by the normative definitions proffered by books naïvely titled What is Life? or What is Death?

was Ducasse who first defined causality as a tripartite concept governing the single agreement and single difference that constitute the causal necessity of an event: *A* (the cause) causes *B* (the effect) if and only if they occur within a set of circumstances *C*. Later in the twentieth century N. A. Kozyrev, an astrophysicist from the Soviet Union, made several significant discoveries about the nature of causality while studying the properties of time. First, he showed that the cause is always outside the entity in which the effect is realized, regardless of whether the entity is physical or mental. Second, he said that time is thick around a cause, because energy is being added, and thin around an effect, because energy is being subtracted. And third, he demonstrated that causes and effects are separated by a finite space-time difference and that the transition between them is realized only with the aid of what he called the time pattern *Ce*.

I have identified the transition Kozyrev spoke of as one of a number of portals between the fourth and fifth dimensional realms. The phenomenon, which I call the abyss of transition in time, is a natural singularity that can be witnessed. (Because it is a natural singularity and not one formed by gravitational collapse, like a black hole, it is not subject to the cosmic censorship hypothesis promulgated by the Oxford mathematician Roger Penrose, which says that there can be no "naked" singularities.)

The Distinction:

Life and Death as Entification

The best way to understand the interaction between life and death and to find clues to methodologies that might successfully unite them is to describe the arena between time and eternity, which are expressed respectively by the fourth and fifth dimensions of temporality. I believe that what might be called

the dimensional spectrum of reality has numerous aspects. Life and death are therefore as unlikely to be ontological opposites as they are to be described by the normative definitions proffered by books naïvely titled *What is Life?* or *What is Death?* The entification of life and death should not be so much a quest for the "thing" itself as an accounting of the possible relationships among their attributes. Life, death, and whatever else exists on the dimensional spectrum of reality are all ultimately unfathomable mysteries. Human experience is naturally embedded in more than the mystery of life. Perceptions, conceptions, revelations, imaginings, willings, and memories all evince the human mind's ability to explore many more of nature's dimensions.

In my dimensional spectrum of reality, which I call the Octave of Dimensional Spissitude, death has its origin in the fifth dimensional realm, Eternity-Vosolid, and life its origin in the fourth dimensional realm, Time-Solvold. Durance-Solid, the third dimensional realm, and Succession-Plane, the second dimensional realm, move out of the jurisdiction of bodily pleasure and pain but not out of the domain of perception or of mental pleasure and pain.

These four dimensional realms are related to Plato's four realms of knowledge: conjecture, belief, thinking, and true knowledge. Plato likened conjecture, the lowest realm, to shadows. The idea derives from the ancient Egyptian concept of the shadow as a part of the human personality. In fact, shadows are the only authentic way we can prove the existence of the second dimensional realm. Revelation, or the mystical experience, identifies the fifth dimensional realm, or death; the perception of a shadow gives evidence of another power. As a child I listened to "The Shadow" on the radio and wondered if it



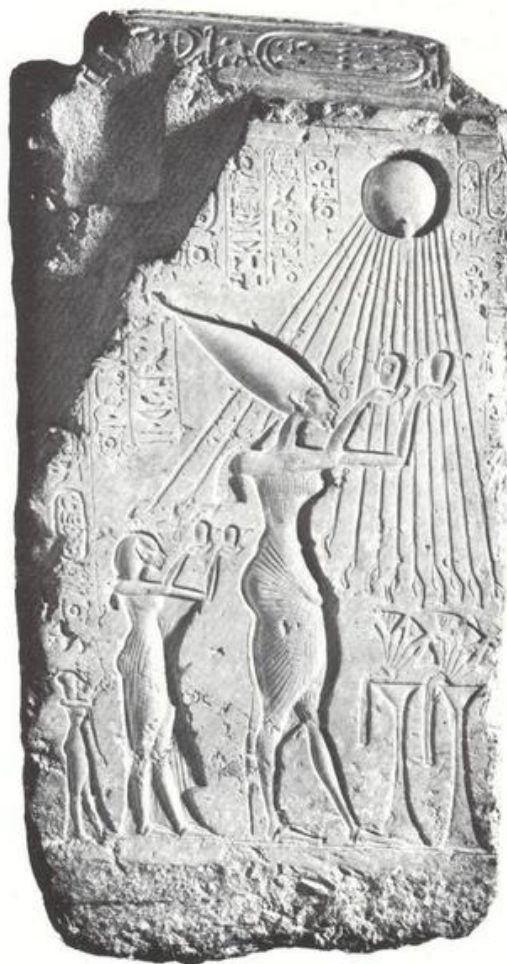
would be possible actually to become a shadow. The Shadow (Lamont Cranston) used "a power, learned in the Orient, to cloud men's minds" so they could not see him. This obviously meant that he did not really become a shadow. I was disappointed, and I always felt that somewhere in Tibet there existed a lama who could become a shadow at will. Shadows are not invisible. They are simply another kind of entity.

It is by means of conceptualization and imagination that we conjecture about dimensional realms below the second and above the fifth. The interaction, or mutual causality, between the body and the mind gives rise to the feeling of life energy as motion and its manifestations in the form of male, or active, motion and female, or passive, motion. But in life an aspect of the mind *without the body* already exists in the realm of death, and thus that aspect of the mind can experience mental causality unto itself, giving rise to the knowledge that the energy of death is efficacious without motion. Death energy is the "weirdness" people report when they describe a near-death experience, an astral projection, or a dream. Whereas the will is surely indicative of life, memory emanates from the neutral or sexless energy of death. Memory gives rise to our sense of history, or the mythical connectivity that overrides the relationships of competition or cooperation that are so characteristic of human life.

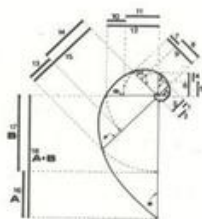
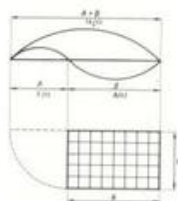
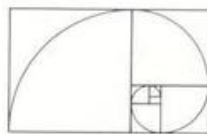
Meta-energy

I call the energy of death, or the fifth dimensional realm, meta-energy. Meta-energy's major characteristic is that it is efficacious without motion. Kato-energy is the energy of life, or the fourth dimensional realm. Although the concept of energy is at its base a mystery, in mechanics it is defined as being either potential, possessed by reason of position or condition, or kinetic, possessed

by reason of motion. Both forms of energy are related to the ability to do work, and both are forms of the energy of life, or kato-energy, which is efficacious with motion. The term efficacious means having the power to produce a desired effect and is not necessarily self-referential to the idea of motion. Meta-energy should not therefore be confused with what classical mechanics calls potential energy. Meta-energy is the energy identified with revelation in religious and esoteric traditions. It has been given many



Right: Akhenaten and Nefertiti adoring the sun
Bettmann Archive



Examples of the golden proportion

names, for many different purposes: odic force, elan vital, prana, etheric force, ki, ch'i, tumo, orgone, vril, the Holy Spirit, en-soph, ectenic force, azoth, elixir vitae, pneuma, psychic force, shakti. Although present in all forms of causality, meta-energy has been identified in the causal events that constitute the operation of that part of the human mind that exists within the fifth dimensional realm.

Ducasse distinguished four categories of causal relations: in the first category the cause and effect are both physical; in the second the cause is physical but the effect is mental; in the third the cause is mental but the effect is physical; and in the fourth, the psychophysical, both the cause and effect are mental. It is because psychophysical causal relations exist and because an aspect of the human mind exists within the dimension of death that we have become aware of meta-energy and realized its significance. Kozyrev stated that the cause is always outside the entity in which the effect is realized, regardless of whether the entity is physical or mental. The "outside" in this case is the fifth dimensional realm. Those who report a revelation or mystical experience often say they felt they were in the presence of something that seemed more alive than life itself. They are attempting to describe meta-energy.

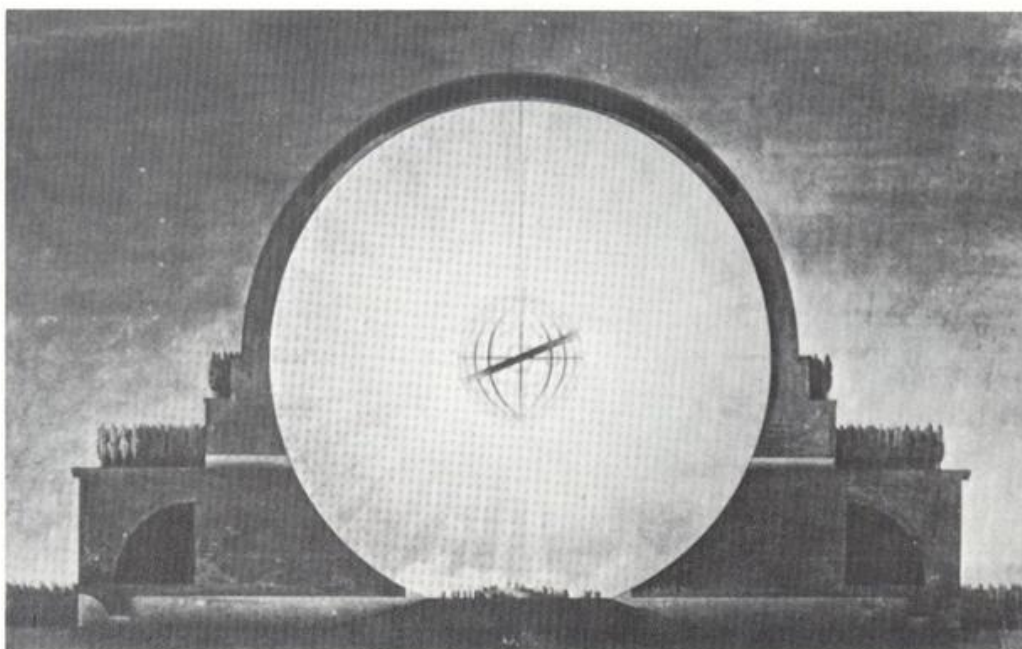
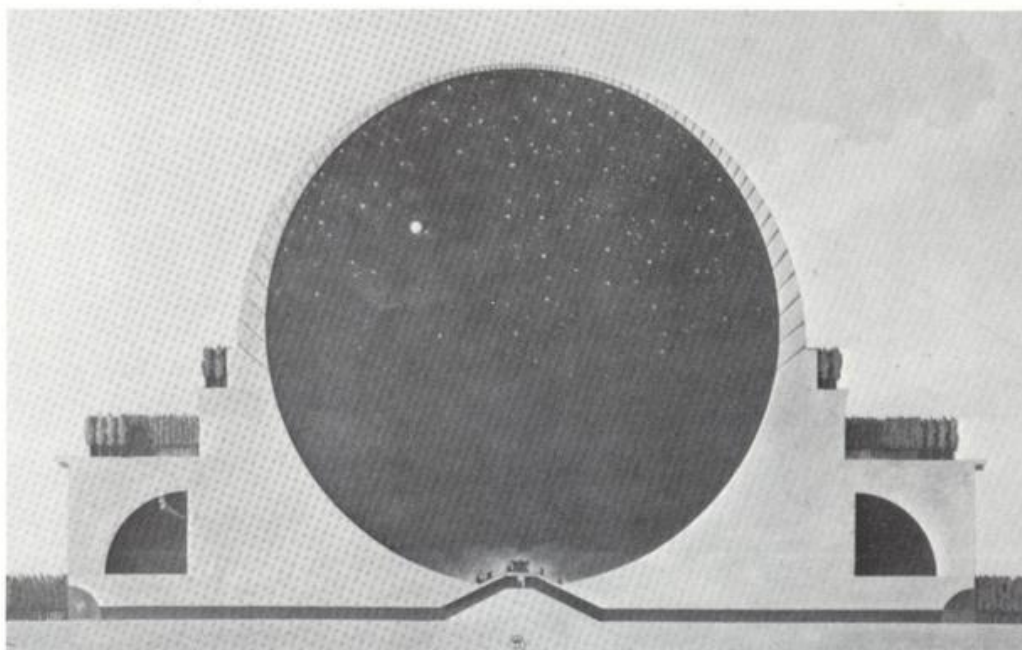
I believe that it is possible to unite the energies of life and death by using instruments to tap that part of the human mind that already resides in the fifth dimension, the thanapsyche. The instruments would be modeled on or be analogous to the nature of the thanapsyche. The thanapsyche is literally the singularity of the total human mind, so the ancillary instruments would have to consist of contrived, or structured, singularities. Structured singularities can best be described as mechanisms that can be used

to open and close dimensional portals in order to access or release meta-energy to and from the fourth dimensional realm. The possibility of such an exchange of energy assumes a dimensional system that is not simply a static description of various realms of reality.

The dynamism of life-death interaction has traditionally been attributed exclusively to phi, or the divine proportion, which is the division of any unity into .618 . . . and .382 . . . , an incommensurable. The divine or golden proportion, able to unite the dynamic asymmetry of life with the static symmetry of death, was indigenous to the ancient world and its wisdom. But when calculus was able to successfully describe continuous motions in nature the divine proportion went out of fashion. Today chaos theory and fractals, or the mathematics of fractional dimensionality, are reestablishing the historical primacy of the divine proportion as the master describer of the portals in a dimensional system that is a true analogy of reality.

The so-called Koch curve, discovered in 1904, possesses no tangent and abruptly changes direction at every point. The Koch curve lies between spatial dimensions one and two; it is like a line trying to become a plane. In like manner the divine proportion can be viewed as a fractal between dimension zero and one; it is like a point trying to become a line. The fractal analogue between dimensions four and five—life and death—must be complex, unique, and unpredictable enough to describe our vision of life as we experience it. Yet it must also contain the seed of the master singularity, the divine proportion.

Boullée, *Cenotaph for
Newton*, section
Above: night view at day
Below: day view at night



THE ORGONE MOTOR

1981

Oil, acrylic, ink, and lettering on canvas

73½ × 73½ in.

186.5 × 186.5 cm

Subject: A Motor Powered by Meta-energy—An Unrealized Dream of Wilhelm Reich

Symbol Evocation: The Cosmic Egg

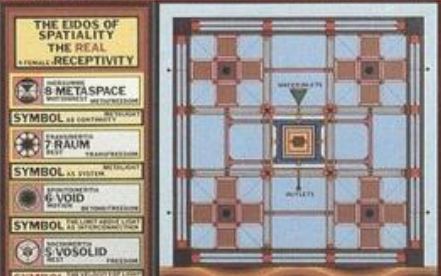
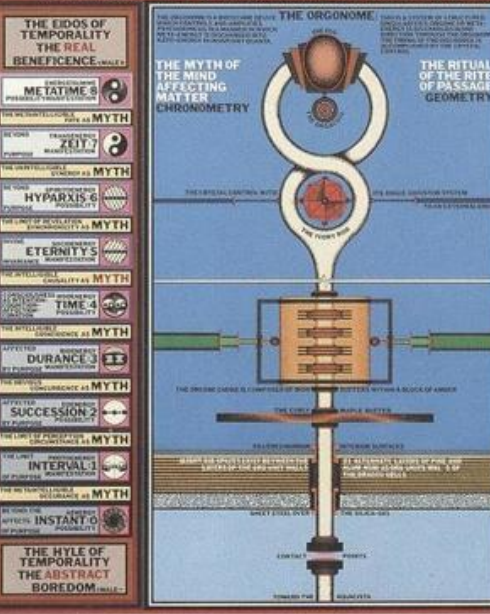
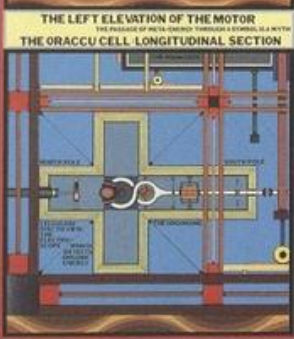
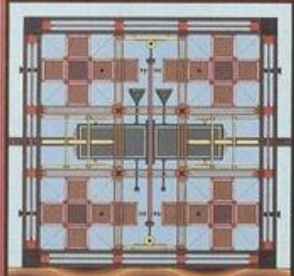
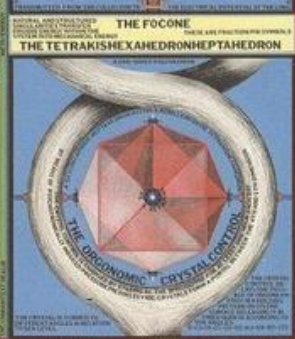
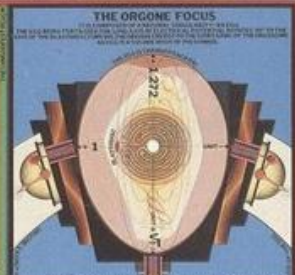
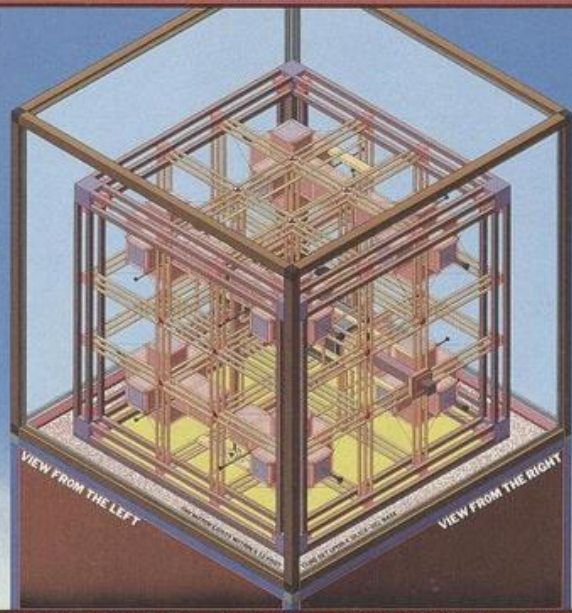
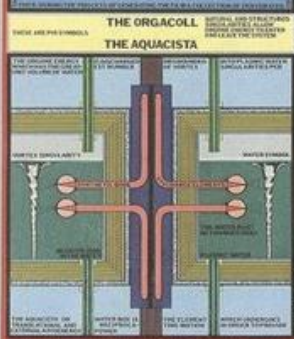
Comments: In terms of its output the motor is a simple reciprocating engine that produces kato-energy. However, its input energy is meta-energy, or in Reich's terms, orgone energy.

The energy cycle functions as follows: a) Orgone is collected. b) A special psychotronic generator converts the orgone energy into an amplified form of psychokinesis in single timed pulses. c) The pulses are then discharged into the water box.

The oraccu, or orgone collection boxes, act like condensers of meta-energy from natural singularities that exist in all fluids. Any vortex in a medium utilizes the equiangular spiral and is therefore a phi-ratio singularity. Air has the same vortex quality as fluids, and, in this case, it is from air that meta-energy is drawn. A liquid crystal focuses the collected orgone energy that then enters the longitudinal electromagnetic axis of a freshly fertilized turtle egg. As the blasto-disc descends toward the center of the yoke, the electromagnetic axis rotates ninety degrees, transferring the orgone energy to the ivory arms of the Orgonome. A single pulse is released from the Orgonome (an example of nonhuman psychokinesis), and discharged into the water box which undergoes simple translational motion back and forth within the frame of the motor. A control singularity, a tetrakis hexahedron-heptahedron, holds the pulse of orgone energy a fraction of a second before it is released into the water box to create a time-delay pattern, so that the pulses of the two sides of oroccu boxes are out of phase with each other. Thus when one set of oraccu boxes and their Orgonomes are organically producing psychokinesis, the other set is at rest, and vice-versa. The controls are made of piezoelectric crystals that must be stared at for a least one hour daily while blinking at the rate of two blinks per second. This means that two people must blink out of phase with each other by a half-second at four control crystals at once to get them working properly. The crystals' effect as controls is further modified by rotating them.

As a biotechnic machine, this design phase exhibits a relatively low order of work efficiency which will be improved upon in later designs.

THE ENGINEERING OF META-ENERGY INTO MOTION - THE ORGONE MOTOR - BY MEANS OF SYMBOLS AS PHYSICAL SINGULARITIES



HOMAGE TO: WILHELM REICH, EDWIN A. ABBOTT, CLAUDE BRAGDON, ROBERT HARE, C.H. HINTON, P.D. OUSPENSKY, ROBERT PAVLITA, PYTHAGORAS, NIKOLAI KOZYREV, ALFRED JARRY AND M.C. ESCHER.

THE DIMENSIONAL SPISSITUDE of the universe

Fate and Free Will

A full understanding of dimensionality must have the same total impact on the contemporary world as the notion of fate had on the classical world. In fact, I propose that when it is fully understood and appreciated dimensionality will be seen as a revival of the ancient idea of fate (*fata* in Latin and *moirai* in Greek). A *fatum* or *moira* was an oracle's prophetic declaration of that which is destined or decreed to come to pass in time.

Anthropomorphized and divided into three functions, fate became for the ancients the Three Fates, the daughters of Chaos and Night, the sisters of Nemesis and Eris: Clotho, the Spinner, who spins the thread of life; Lachesis, the Disposer of Lots, who determines the length of the thread of life; and Atropos, the Inflexible, who cuts the thread of life. Destiny, Lot, Portion, and Doom—cousins of the Fates—introduce menace, blind chance, the distribution of good and evil, and the calamitous into the notion of fate.

From a nineteenth-century perspective fate was believed to be a prephilosophical concept deriving from mythology, and mythology in the nineteenth century was defined as traditional beliefs based on unfounded notions. Eventually the term fate came to suggest inevitability and immutability in a strict sense, with no clear implication of whether the outcome would be good or evil. As in Homeric times, most people today believe in both fate and free will. Although such a position can be held intellectually, the two concepts are contradictory from the point of view of modal logic.

The encounter between fate and free will is much richer than analytical philosophers, who reduce it to simply the conflict of determinism versus indeterminism, would



After Giulio Romano,
The Three Fates
Bettmann Archive

have us believe. Free will cannot be simply defined as some kind of indeterministic element within the human personality. Free will actually means that you are free to do what you will. An individual's volitional nature (which can be strengthened or weakened by choosing or not choosing) is a complete mental entity, like the imagination or the intellect. The will is itself conditioned by the reasons, emotions, and ideas that form its motivational matrix and that establish some of the circumstances for individual acts of willing. I believe this conditioning process of the volitional nature is the channel to fate itself.

The experience of freedom of will, or being and feeling that we are free to do what we will even though our volitional nature undergoes a history of determinants, gives rise to our belief in the preciousness of free will. This conviction arises from our perception of the ontological interaction of the uniformity, universality, and invariance of causality with history and historical facts, which are subject to only a very limited degree of predictability.

Dimensionality

Dimension has long been formally defined in mathematics as the measurement within a coordinated system of the spatial extensions of the quantitative aspect of an entity. The Cartesian coordinate system developed in the

seventeenth century did just that. In the early 1900s Einstein and Minkovskij expanded the Cartesian system of three spatial dimensions to include time as a distinct dimension, although they were still only concerned with time's quantitative modalities. The term dimensionality is also used to refer to the discovery of any sort of pattern within any set of elements or entities. Because these definitions are in common use they cannot be gainsaid. However, I object to mathematicians or physicists simply assuming into existence whatever dimensions are deemed necessary to sustain a current theory and then calling the process legitimate because they are not "absolutizing" the dimensions they create. And I disagree with the position that any attempt to truly enlarge the definition of dimension will fail to yield real knowledge.

An adequate dimensional system must monitor invariance in nature both quantitatively and qualitatively. Such a system must be a transdisciplinary effort that takes into account the nature of the universe in both its physical and metaphysical aspects and recognizes the limits of human imagination. Even though all attempts to discover the true dimensional system of the universe presuppose an absolute conclusion, the effort is always conditioned by the incompleteness of human perception or revelation, and conclusions are necessarily relative. Yet the dimensional system must not be abandoned, for like the ancient concept of fate (which I believe dimensionality replaces), dimensionality is literally the ultimate context of the universe and allows meaning to manifest itself, whether that meaning is divine or natural.

The Construction and Context of Dimensionality

Over the last five centuries the concept of dimension has been dominated by the purely visual space of the Renaissance, with its concern for organizing the universe from a single static position. Even Baroque space, which introduced movement into the system, did not rid itself of the notion—inherent in the perspective point—that some part of the universe is inaccessible to the human imagination. But by using Pythagorean ideas of acoustic space and the concept of flowing space of many non-Western cultures, it is possible to construct a dimensional system that would meet the criteria outlined above. Interpreting space and time through sound or music does not presuppose some innate superiority of music over the visual arts.

Music, as surely as painting, can be regarded as an imitative art. Music's popular function is to imitate emotional states and to evoke them in the listener. But what I am referring to is the fundamentally abstract structure of music. Abstraction has always been associated with music and only recently with the visual arts. Even the "stuff" of sound itself is somehow less material and more ephemeral than the long-lasting matter of the visual arts. Furthermore, viewing space from one position creates a false sense of human control over space, but apprehending space through sound (or resonance in confinement) offers a better understanding of space for what it is: the anonymous, energy-filled, inhuman matrix of the extent of the universe.

However, there is a human need for complete and finite experiences that music also fulfills. An arithmetic progression of quantitative frequencies is without limit and totally inhuman. Yet as each note is heard there is a closure. Hearing an octave series begin, end, and repeat at a higher or lower frequency



literally unites the human with the inhuman. Notes and scales provide a natural analogue for dimensionality. According to Pythagoras and neo-Pythagoreans like Hans Kayser, the octave as an organizing system preserves and promotes the integrity of the human and the inhuman in a balance that prevents the dominance of one over the other.

I have used the octave to develop my dimensional system, which I call the Octave of Dimensional Spissitude:

The Octave of Temporality	The Octave of Spatiality
0 - Instant	0 - Point
1 - Interval	1 - Line
2 - Succession	2 - Plane
3 - Durance	3 - Solid
4 - Time	4 - Solvoid
5 - Eternity	5 - Vosolid
6 - Hyparxis	6 - Void
7 - Zeit	7 - Raum
8 - Metatime	8 - Metaspac



Gafurius, *Musice*
Bettmann Archive

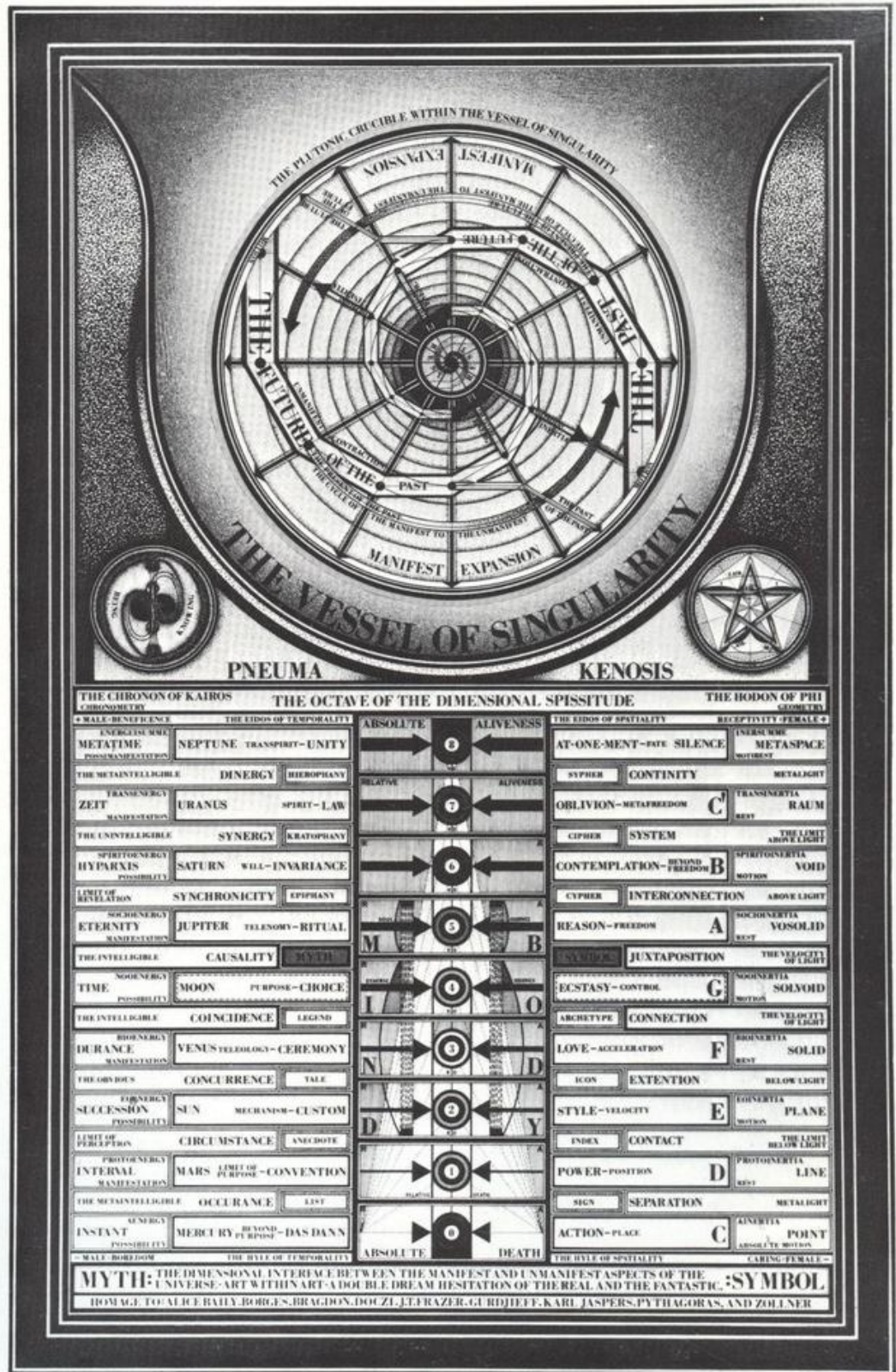
Each dimension is described as a realm, or domain—territorial nomenclature that avoids a strictly mathematical connotation. The realms are numbered zero to eight, thereby allowing a zero to eight identification if the system were extended indefinitely. Qualitatively, dimension zero contains absolute death and dimension eight contains absolute aliveness. Life and death are distributed relatively through dimensions one to seven. There is a sense of increasing aliveness and ontological richness as you move up the dimensional realms, with the inverse occurring as you move down the realms. The system corresponds to divine spissitude, or the ontological thickening or thinning of the universe. Dimension eight represents the thickest ontological state, the unity of the one—the cosmic egg. Dimension zero represents the many—the cosmic hatch. Through realms seven to one

the one falls into the many—the female breathing out—and from one through seven the many rises into the one—the male breathing in.

Each of the dimensional realms has two modes: Spatiality, which is feminine as a whole, and Temporality, which is masculine as a whole. In the Octave of Temporality the particular even-numbered, feminine dimensional realms are modes of possibility and the odd-numbered, masculine dimensional realms are modes of manifestation. In the Octave of Spatiality the even-numbered, feminine dimensional realms are modes of motion and the odd-numbered, masculine dimensional realms are modes of rest. The two octaves interact differently at each dimensional realm. Instant and Point are totally disconnected, whereas Metatime and Meta-space are totally connected. Dimensional realms zero through four represent the physical realm of the universe, and five through eight the metaphysical realm. A major ontological leap occurs between the fourth and fifth dimensional realms. Each dimensional realm has its natural inhabitants and two means of egress, one to a higher realm and one to a lower. The ontological leaps between dimensions happen through dimensional portals, or singularities.

The entire dimensional system represents the sacredness of the universe. Therefore the *hyle*, or unformed matter of dimension zero, and the *eidos*, or formed spirit of dimension eight, are actually ontologically equivalent even though they are dimensionally as far apart as is possible. The notion that the universe contains a profane realm and an opposite sacred realm is an illusion born of human beings' great difficulty in bridging the singularity between dimensional realms four and five.

Laffoley, *The Vessel of Singularity*





After Hogarth, Descartes
Bettmann Archive



Richter, Freud

The New Model of Human Consciousness
Models of consciousness have always existed and the usefulness and relevance of the current model (current in the sense that it is totally understood and named) is based on the success of the 300 year-old scientific method. This model is about to end completely. Its definition began with the ideas of Descartes and was completed by the theories of Freud. Descartes envisioned the consciousness of an immiscible self floating freely in the space of the universe, with which the only possible interaction is ontological voyeurism. He described a methodological agnosticism in which civilization is a product of the free choices of ultimately isolated individuals who are without context and who find themselves left with the imperative to create their own meaning. Freud, heeding the ever-present advice of the Delphic oracle to know thyself, brought this voyeuristic model of consciousness to a bizarre and paradoxical conclusion. Based on his study of dreams and his conception of the subconscious as motivation from below the ego, Freud proposed that the totality of human consciousness is at war with its own unknowingness and lack of context. Then came Carl Jung and the quantum physicist Werner Heisenberg, who discarded this model, arguing that consciousness can and must participate in and interact with the universe.

The imperative that consciousness must interact with the universe presupposes a natural holyarchy; i.e., that one is embedded in the other. Either consciousness is embedded in the universe, or the universe in consciousness. This differs from the voyeuristic model of consciousness in that the nature of human consciousness and the nature of the universe are both considered ontologically equivalent and equally unknowable.

My position is that the universe is always ontologically richer or internally more complex than consciousness, which is a particular aspect of the universe. Many philosophies or religions assume that consciousness, even as humans experience it, is the most alive aspect of the universe, or even that it is the very nature of the universe. Yet to define aliveness in this manner is to subtly anthropomorphize. Aliveness is what provides context to existence, and context provides meaning. Any image of aliveness that tends to be seen as an easily achievable end weakens the definition of aliveness itself. The experience of increasing degrees of aliveness, although part of all great traditions, is vitiated if it is not acknowledged that aliveness can take forms that transcend consciousness itself. By consciousness I mean not only the waking state of the ego but also "unconscious" phenomena like dreams and the traditionally defined transcendent states of "hyper-consciousness" like the mystical experience and revelation.

In books six and seven of *The Republic* Plato presents his three most famous similes, that of the sun, the divided line, and the cave, in order to demonstrate the context of human consciousness. In the simile of the sun he makes the distinction between the visible world and the intelligible world. I would call this the difference between the physical and the metaphysical realms, or between dimensional realms zero to four and five to eight. The simile of the line divided by the divine proportion expresses the four ascending states of consciousness, each of which subsumes the lower state. In the realm of fallible opinion, illusion is followed by belief. In the realm of the infallible knowledge, reasoning leads to intelligence. Plato's model for states of mind corresponds with the progression within dimensional realms two through five.

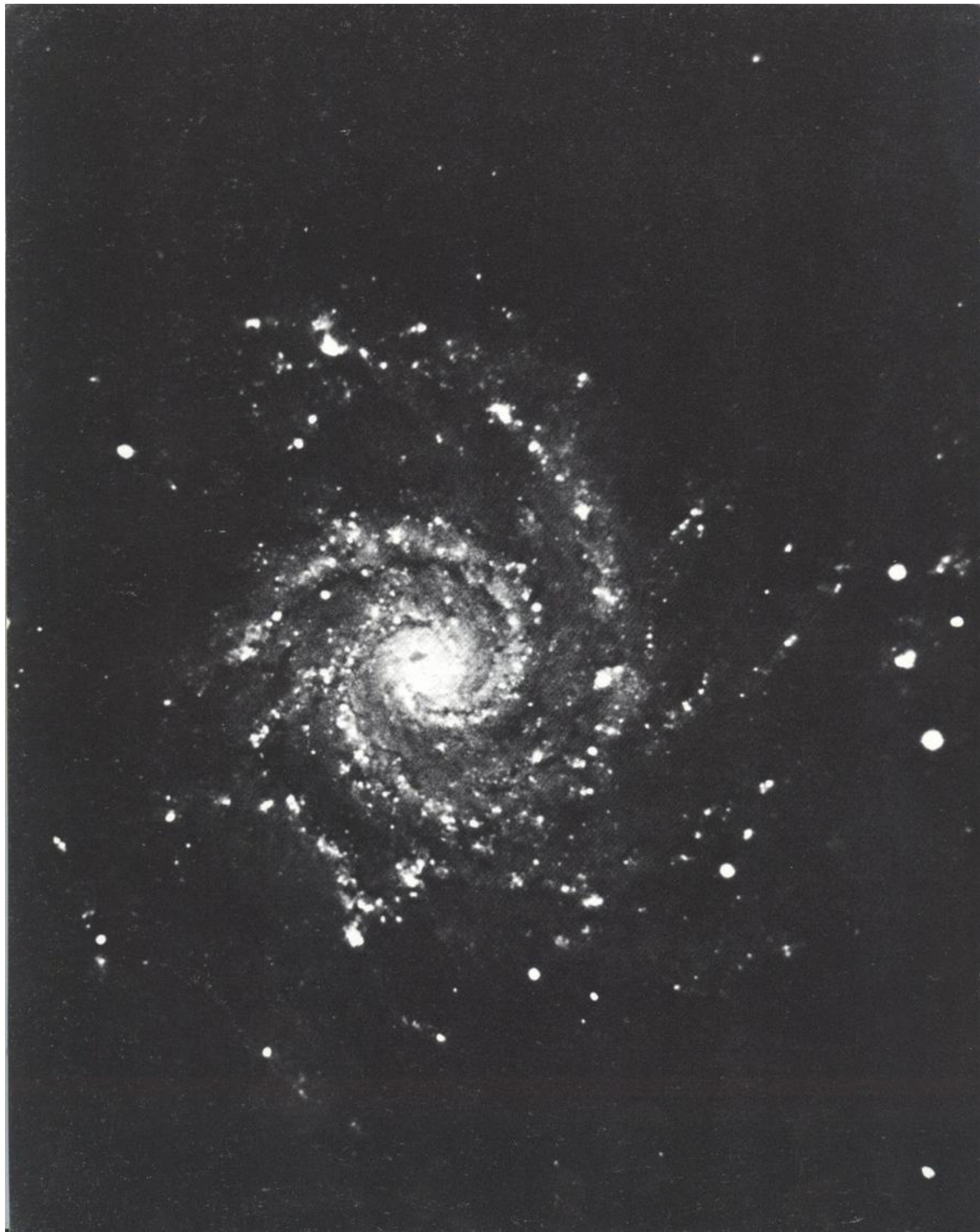
Illusion is characteristic of the second realm, belief of the third, reasoning of the fourth, and intelligence of the fifth.

In his simile of the cave Plato describes the natural inhabitants of these states of mind. In the cave the bound prisoners see only shadows. Shadows are the authentic inhabitants of the second dimension. The second dimension is one limit of human physical perception. The first dimension of Interval-Line and the zero dimension of Instant-Point can only be known by the conceptual imagination. Once a prisoner has been freed he sees the moving models that produced the shadows and believes he now knows reality. This is analogous to believing the world is three-dimensional. When a prisoner leaves the cave for the open air above, he suddenly is no longer a prisoner but a potential philosopher-king or adept. But because the direct light is so blinding he must turn away for a while and so he sees only reflected light that distorts the true nature of forms. This state is analogous to the fourth dimension that exists in the physical realm but points to, and potentially allows access to, the metaphysical realm. Finally, the newly initiated philosopher-king's eyes adjust and he can stare right into the light. The leap has been made to the fifth dimensional realm via the structured singularity of Symbol-Myth. I maintain that the fifth dimension is the limit of human revelation. The higher dimensions, the sixth, the seventh, and the eighth, can be known only by the conceptual imagination.

Plato hints at something else in *The Timaeus* when he refers to the demiurge, the subordinate deity who fashions the sensible world in the light of the eternal forms. He points to the fact that human consciousness has a true context only when it acknowledges that something exists beyond the highest form of consciousness any individual can obtain.



Potential adept



Participation in what is beyond the limits of human consciousness is the mystical experience. To transcend the mystical experience would be to enter the sixth dimensional realm, which I believe is impossible for an individual ego because entirely entering the fifth dimensional realm means death of the physical body and the conscious ego.

Since it is possible to return from the mystical experience and its cognate the near-death experience, it has been conjectured throughout history that there might be a way to go beyond death or the mystical experience, which would necessarily transcend the individual ego. The way has been called many names at different times in history and has often been considered a variation on the idea of utopia. (Although in common usage the word utopia has acquired an imprecise and limited meaning.)

It was during the first century A.D. that the path to higher states was best articulated. The Gnostics (one of the three main branches of early Christianity) were the first to see the formation of a conventicle as a way to collective transcendence. Although in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries a conventicle came to connote unlawful or unauthorized meetings of Protestant dissenters, originally it meant the development of a harmonious collective state for the purpose of removing the collective from the *tibil* (the evilness of natural historical circumstances), both mentally and physically. A vestige of the Gnostic concept of conventicle is present in such Christian teachings as the rapture, the bodily assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary to heaven, the resurrection of Christ, miraculous alterations of the laws of nature, and the uniting of the body and the soul at the Last Judgment.

A complete conventicle has several aspects. It must have a physical as well as a mental component and be of the largest possible scope given the circumstance. Noah's ark is the archetypal legend of the conventicle. What was done was the best that could be done at the time in the full realization that *something* would be left behind in the quest for greater aliveness. The Gnostics accepted the cyclic vision of history as it was conceived in the age of Pericles, which held that civilization contains high and low points and is characterized by the eternal recurrence of historical forms. The Gnostics added one idea to that vision, however: that at the absolute zenith of the high point of one of civilization's cycles there exists a single instant out of time, a *kairos*, or critical moment (a singularity), when a portion of that civilization, if it is properly prepared, can leave for good—right out of history with no trace left in time. Correct preparation meant finding the proper collaboration to overcome the limits of individual human creativity through group mystical experience, while at the same time maintaining a connection with the energy of the physical earth.

I believe we are heading for a new zenith of civilization. This time, given our imperative to explore both outer space and the micro-space of quantum dynamics, there is the very likely possibility that the scope of a future conventicle could be the entire physical universe and all its inhabitants.

Spiral galaxy's mandala pattern

THE ASTRAKAKITERABOAT

1983

Oil, acrylic, ink, and lettering on canvas

69½ × 75½ in.

176.5 × 192 cm

Collection First National Bank of Chicago

Subject: The Kite-Boat and Astral Projection

Symbol Evocation: The Ship as the Symbol of Eternal Wandering

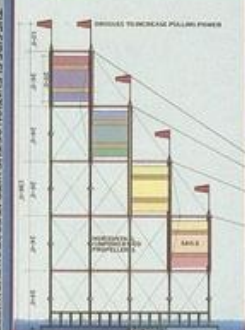
Comments: Astral projection, or the journey of the ka, was the major motif of classical Egypt; it was considered the natural link between life and death. Astral projection affected the daily lives of the Egyptians through religious ritual, the arts, and architecture. The Sun was seen as the source of life, and was both the origin and final destination of the soul. The ship was the symbol of the wandering of the soul after death.

The kite-boat is an attempt to practice the art of invention with a sensibility akin to that of the ancient Egyptians. What I tried to do was place myself within the mind of Imhotep, the architect of the step pyramid of King Zoser of the Third Dynasty. Imhotep was the first noted architect in Western history, remarkable also for his rare combination of powers as an organizer, statesman, and master of all arts and crafts. He was called Grand Vizier; Chief Judge; Overseer of the King's Records; Bearer of the Royal Seal; Chief of All Works of the King; Supervisor of That Which Heaven Brings, the Earth Creates, and the Nile Brings; Supervisor of Everything in this Entire Land; The Chancellor of the King of Lower Egypt; Chief Under Hereditary Nobles; and the Heliopolitan High Priest. Two millennia after his death he was raised to the stature of a god of healing. I asked myself if such a person had not died, what would he be doing now?

A clue came from the nineteenth century, when, prompted by the discovery of the Rosetta Stone in 1789, ancient Egypt itself was rediscovered. The nineteenth century made two basic breakthroughs: the invention of electricity and advances in kite technology that led to the heavier-than-air flying machines of the twentieth century. It would have been natural for Imhotep to connect these two ideas in the kite-boat. By means of electricity he could have induced the wandering of the soul during life (the ka-body) and symbolized the entire process by the kite. The kite is the ka, the ropes are the astral cord, and the boat is the physical body held down but still wandering over the earth. With this invention Imhotep could have worshiped the sun directly from out on the ocean, connected life with death, and have had the freedom of never having to stay in one place.

THE ETERNAL WANDERING OF THE SOUL IN THE BARGE OF THE DEITY: THE ASTRAKITE BOAT: THE PROPER ENVIRONMENT FOR THE PRACTICE OF ASTRAL PROJECTION

THE SIDE ELEVATION OF THE KITE AT REST ON THE WATER



THE SOUL GUARD

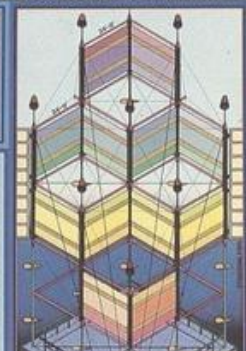


THE NINE ASPECTS OF THE EGYPTIAN PERSONALITY



ASTRAL ANALOGUES

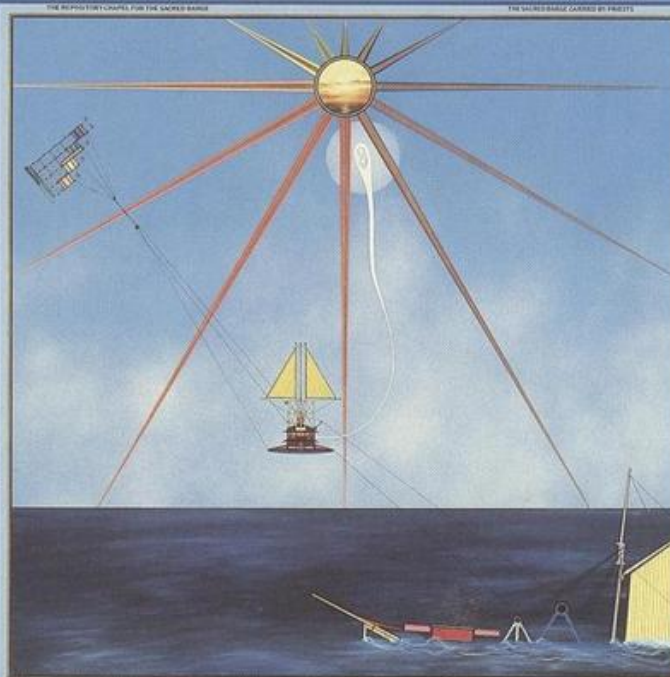
ASTRAL	ANALOGUE	ASTRAL	ANALOGUE
1. THE ASTRAL BODY	THE KITE	10. THE ASTRAL BODY	THE KITE
2. THE ASTRAL BODY	THE KITE	11. THE ASTRAL BODY	THE KITE
3. THE ASTRAL BODY	THE KITE	12. THE ASTRAL BODY	THE KITE
4. THE ASTRAL BODY	THE KITE	13. THE ASTRAL BODY	THE KITE
5. THE ASTRAL BODY	THE KITE	14. THE ASTRAL BODY	THE KITE
6. THE ASTRAL BODY	THE KITE	15. THE ASTRAL BODY	THE KITE
7. THE ASTRAL BODY	THE KITE	16. THE ASTRAL BODY	THE KITE
8. THE ASTRAL BODY	THE KITE	17. THE ASTRAL BODY	THE KITE
9. THE ASTRAL BODY	THE KITE	18. THE ASTRAL BODY	THE KITE



THE FRONT ELEVATION OF THE KITE IN FLIGHT

THE SUBJECTIVE KA

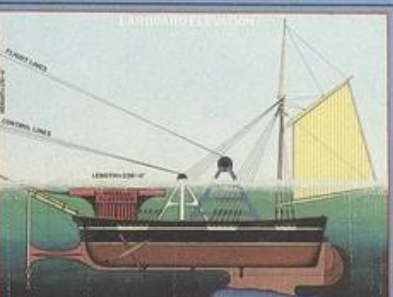
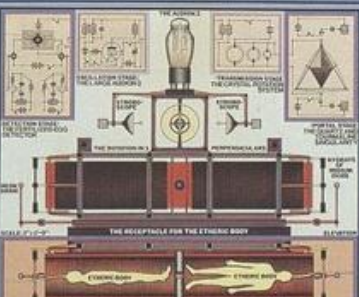
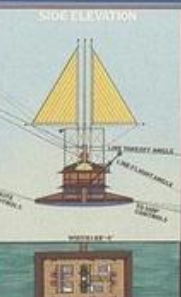
THE OBJECTIVE KA



THE ETHERIC BODY: THE KA TRIP AND EXTENDED: THE PHANTOM

NUT: THE GODDESS OF THE SKY AS GUIDE FOR THE KA

THROUGH THE 3-FOLD SYMBOL OF THE ETERNAL RETURN.



THE TROLLEY NACELLE

THE ASTRATRON

THE SUBMERSIBLE 1800 BARK 'PEQUOD'

HOMAGE TO IMHOTEP THE ARCHITECT OF THE MURDER BY COMPLEX AT SANABARA OF KING DOKER, AND HIS PRISON OF HELIOPOLIS, SOUND VISION, MAGICAL HEALER, THE SPIRIT GUIDE OF THE GODS

My Father and

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WORLD

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MY FATHER AND ME

When I was about nine or ten my father decided to take me to New York City. This was to be my first trip, so my mother decided to stay home so my father, who was a very fast walker, could introduce me to his favorite haunts without delays. The train ride was relatively uneventful as we passed through Rhode Island and the rural parts of Connecticut. In the absence of my mother we sat in stony silence for a long while. Years later I would take this ride many times by myself in the same void as I passed through these same areas, with the exception of one time when the train came to an abrupt halt in the middle of a dense woods. You couldn't see more than twenty feet out on either side of the coach. We had been waiting what seemed like an hour when a long black sedan pulled up alongside the train. It apparently had come right between the trees and through the underbrush to get there. The local coroner opened his car door and emerged with a bullhorn at his mouth to announce that the reason for the delay was that some guy had committed suicide by lying across the tracks and that if we wanted to get going any faster some people had better help him look for the body parts strewn in the woods and under the wheels, because the train wasn't going to budge an inch until he had



"everything." At first I and the other passengers were stunned, but soon horror began to wear off and the silence broke as people started looking at their watches, getting up, and moving outside. I overheard comments like, "Damned inconsiderate of him to use train tracks. He should have shot himself or jumped off a bridge like most people." As I was about to get up myself I heard a woman outside exclaim with obvious delight, "Oh wow! I found the head." I sank back into my seat with a sigh of relief knowing we would be soon on our way. But this particular memory was still in my future.

By now we had crossed the Connecticut border and were well into New York State. My father's mood had begun to lighten. His three-piece dark-blue serge banker's uniform began to rumple and his tie was at half-mast. An enthusiasm came over him that I had never seen in him before. He talked of strange psychic powers in our family, things I had never heard of, and my curiosity was sparked.



When we reached the outskirts of the Bronx my father revealed the day's itinerary. First, we would arrive at Grand Central Station at noon and eat. (In those post-World War II days trains from Boston still stopped at Grand Central.) Next we would head across 42nd Street to Times Square. He always went first to Times Square. To him it was the heart of New York City, the epicenter of its energy. My mother always hated this part of his New York ritual and would invariably grab a cab at the station and head for their hotel. From there it would be back across 42nd again toward the East Side. We would turn left on Fifth Avenue, go north until we reached St. Patrick's Cathedral, go in for a visit—just so he could show me what it was like—return diagonally across the street, enter the promenade of Rockefeller Center, and make a



quick stop at the plaza to see if there were any skaters. (On future trips we would sometimes spend hours watching the skaters.) Then it would be a right onto 50th Street and down in back of the RCA Building to his real target, Radio City Music Hall. His interest in the music hall was not architectural. Today we wax nostalgic about its period Art Deco perfection and its Beaux-Arts monumentality, but during the late forties the music hall represented one thing to my father: it was his personal parapsychology laboratory.

As the train rumbled on past Woodlawn Cemetery, through the South Bronx, and across the Harlem River, I could see Oz laid out before me. Encouraged by my father, my excitement became so great I was hardly listening to him as he explained that when we arrived at the music hall we would go directly to the lobby and synchronize our watches. Then, when the movie was on, I would enter the great auditorium by myself, select a seat at random, and sit down. Although I would not witness the amazing results of his experiment this first time for reasons that will become obvious, on future trips after about fifteen minutes my father would "scan" the audience from the balcony, sensing my position in the great dark sea of people facing the flickering screen. He would find me with an invariance I found uncanny. It was like living in a Rosicrucian ad.

At 125th Street I saw "the long red rows of tenement houses" just before we "burrowed beneath the glitter and swank of Park Avenue and then, Grand Central Station—the crossroads of a million private lives on which are played a thousand dramas daily." I was actually living the lead in one of my favorite radio programs. We finally arrived, and my father, carrying our bags, rushed for the Grand Central Concourse with me trailing



Radio City Music Hall, stage



behind. The first glimpse I had of the vast space of the station's interior was a vision of pure grandeur. But even then it was being invaded by huge three-dimensional advertising displays. Both my father and I liked these signs. But what did we know? And besides, Pop Art was still twenty years in the future. He was glad to hear I was hungry. In a flash we were seated at the Oyster Bar on the lower concourse. Raw oysters were my father's favorite food. He would eat them right up to the seasonal limits and sometimes out of season; eventually he died as a result. As I looked at my plate of oysters, I thought of the time he had taken me for my first lobster in Gloucester, Massachusetts, and I ended up in the hospital with a strong allergic reaction. But the oysters went down easily and my father seemed so happy then. Our schedule was rushed, so in a few minutes we were out on the sun-filled street of a cool day in October, the bags stowed safely in a station locker.

My first view of New York was a swift upward glance to the right. Out of the corner of my eye I caught sight of what I thought was a scene of certain doom: a fully loaded cab careening out of control up on half a bridge built right up against the side of a building. And yet I heard no crash. Anyway, it must have been a combination of the excitement of my first day in New York City and my "vision of certain death" that released the oysters from my possession. My father reminded me of how much better I always felt afterward, adding that it must have been the train ride. I said, "No! It was the car, Dad!" He then carefully explained to me that what I had seen was simply Park Avenue South penetrating Grand Central Station to continue on the other side as Park Avenue. I could hardly believe what I was hearing. We came from Belmont, Massachusetts, where roads kept buildings apart; they did not go through them. I started fantasizing about cars and trucks smashing through our living room when guests were over.

The wildest Belmont got was not even embodied in one of its residents but in an itinerant gardener who made the rounds of the neighborhood each summer. When he would come to trim our bushes he would tell me about how he and his son had been taken up in a UFO. (Today he would be classified as a typical UFO contactee.) He made little impression on the folks of Belmont, who considered him harmless enough and a good worker, but a nut. This possibility only increased my interest in him. My parents' reaction to his stories was the conventional skepticism of our neighbors: mine, of course, was fascination. So that when I saw Robert Wise's *The Day the Earth Stood Still* in 1951, I had been primed. I felt as if the film had been made for me personally; I was transfixed by the external and internal forms of

VE Day, Times Square
UPI/Bettmann Newsphotos

Before Woody Allen) discuss cultural straws in the wind like the well-known phenomenon of the "dynamic indifference" of corporate leaders, a stress-inducing technique aimed at their underlings that was then considered a new weapon for mass social control and has yet to be declared illegal.

It seems my father saw New York City as Utopia. This goes way beyond merely liking or even loving the city. His conviction was based not on a particular belief or act of faith, but rather on an experience of transcendence. This happened to him on VE Day at the end of World War II. At the time the U.S. entered into battle he was six months beyond draft age. He had wanted to enlist but my mother had pleaded with him not to. He complied with her wishes but he never forgave her. As it happened, he was on a routine business trip to New York just at the moment when the news of the end of the war hit the city. He was walking by himself near Times Square on his way to his appointment when he was unexpectedly forced into the frenzy of a gathering mob about to converge into the next stage of evolution. For my father it must have been the psychological catalyst of the years of frustrated patriotism, which had been mounting as he was running around in an air-raid warden's helmet in our sleepy little suburb, that allowed him to join the spontaneous celebration. He was transported to the very brink of an epiphany. My mother confided to me later that when he came home he had changed in some way she could not fully understand. To him no aspect of New York City was now too trivial for adoration; the good, the bad, and the indifferent all reached a democratic equality of total acceptance. Living within the geographic boundaries of the city mattered little to him—where the city was, he was also, and where he was, so was the city.

Just as Julius Caesar convinced the inhabitants of Gaul that they were actually living in Rome, my father demonstrated by *reductio ad absurdum* that our house in Belmont was part of New York City. As for me, over the years I began to think that the physical rock, soil, buildings, and thoughts of Manhattan Island were to him symbolic of the entire earth. He might even have reasoned that if a black hole from the depths of space were to float by the solar system and casually swallow the earth, the sheer dynamism of Manhattan would be too much to digest: it would be unceremoniously spat out and would resume the orbit of the former earth while a new earth formed from the very substance of the remnant island. There was something else, I believe, that helped fire my father's eccentricity when it came to New York. It seems that when my parents were first married a friend offered them a one-quarter interest in a hotel complex called Tudor City that was just going up near the east end of 42nd Street. My mother was all for it, and it was her money that was in question. My father was dead set against it, making the traditional banker's claim that it was unwise to invest in real estate ventures. Instead he took the money and sank it into what he considered a better speculation: a utility stock that failed within months after they purchased it and left them in serious debt for years. When the United Nations headquarters was built near Tudor City in the late forties, he finally had to admit the superiority of my mother's business intuition, a fact that gnawed at his financial entrails for years.

My own understanding of my father's revelation has remained that of an observer at the periphery of the arena of action. I even had a chance to up my eschatological ante when my generation inadvertently created the "Woodstock Nation" at Bethel, New York, in



In the early eighties people thought he was a performance artist, but I knew he had merely discovered a way to annoy people in public.

1969. The details of my stay at Woodstock were so bizarre my fellow attendees declared that I wasn't playing with a full deck, thus rendering futile any attempts I might have made to give or receive a feeling of unity. I won't go into the full story here because my sense of decorum does not permit me to. Also, I don't think anyone would believe me. Nevertheless, I will throw out a few hints that may help to explain why I continue to detach myself from any activity that both constrains and guides individuals to comply with a coherent collective pattern of behavior. To start with there were the threatening comments Timothy Leary, who was supposed to have been in jail at the time, made about my paintings a week before the festival. Then a truck containing eighteen of my paintings was hijacked and the paintings were delivered to the festival without my knowledge until it was too late. And finally, I was almost the victim of unintentional cannibalism just because I happened to be standing directly under a helicopter when it made an emergency drop, into a horde of trapped and starving festival goers, of about a half ton of conveniently unwrapped cream-cheese-and-jelly sandwiches on soft white Bunny bread, complete with grimy finger indentations.

Both my father's annoyance and my apprehension began to subside when we made it across Sixth Avenue, and Broadway and the lower end of Times Square were in sight. In those days Sixth Avenue was still a year from being renamed Avenue of the Americas. Dad could never figure out why they did that. When it happened he said it made as much sense as taking down the Washington Monument because its shadow might momentarily offend an illegal sunbather. Throwing a backward glance at Bryant Park as we went forward, I had a premonition that some day I would pay for my sin of frivolity in calling it a parking lot.



As the years went by I quite rightly forgot that foreboding until the early seventies, when I met someone who, as Jean Shepherd might say, "is possessed of the will to annoy." He began to annoy me right away and has continued to do so ever since. As I got to know him, I found out that he is also possessed with the idea that he is the reincarnation of William Cullen Bryant. He claims to be a direct descendant of Bryant. (In his own right he is an excellent poet.) When he had achieved sufficient hair loss and facial maturity he bore an uncanny resemblance to the life-size statue in Bryant Park. Being the first to realize this, he thought of a way to satisfy both his primary and secondary directives simultaneously. He would go to the park and wait around until there was no one to see him slip on a large coat that looked like the one the statue wore. Then he would wedge himself between the back of the statue and the recess wall of the niche. Sometimes after waiting hours until it was sufficiently dark, he would begin to recite "Thanatopsis," almost inaudibly at first. Over and over again he would recite, increasing the volume with each repetition. When he felt a sizable crowd was enthralled, he would step out amid cries of astonishment and announce that he was William Cullen Bryant and that he wanted to thank them all for coming to his park. After that he would run as fast as he could, beaming a sardonic smile, down the steps, across the lawn, and out onto Sixth Avenue, to be seen no more. In the early eighties people thought he was a performance artist, but I knew he had merely discovered a way to annoy people in public. His latest effort is a series of junk musical instruments he has built mainly of electronically amplified screen-door springs, with some gewgaws added for visual impact. When he plays them the noise is so awful it makes a kazoo sound like a harp plucked by



an angel. He used to play these things in my studio until I was forced to throw him out, though he is impervious to insults, whether they are directed at his race, creed, place of national origin, or just *ad hominem*. I believe he is "Bryant's revenge" via the memory of my father.

Standing now on the corner of 42nd Street and Seventh Avenue, my father and I were looking north, where the entire glory of Times Square was revealed. First we watched the smoke rings emanating from a perfectly round mouth on an animated Camel cigarette sign float straight out above the cacophony of the vehicle-infested street below and then slowly descend as they dissipated into a majestic oblivion. On the same Broadway side of the square a little farther down, like two matched sentinels at attention standing guard over reality itself, were the large and lurid images of a man and a woman advertising Bond clothes. By a mechanism I never quite understood, the couple dressed and undressed from the bottom up and then the top down, all but unnoticed by the throngs of pedestrians swarming below. And they stripped not with the coy embarrassment of coquettes but with the matter-of-fact and militant naïveté of 1930s nudists. This tableau



was of as little interest to my father as it was to the other adults wandering around. I, however, who was reaching a certain age, observed the spectacle with fascination. With our return each year thereafter my interest in Bond clothes increased. But one year the stoic lovers who had lived ever separated by the width of the sign were gone, removed no doubt by the city fathers who considered the pair much too prurient for the area.

To my father Times Square was always the sanctum sanctorum of the utopia of Manhattan. He would visit on a regular basis Wall Street, Bleecker Street, Washington Square, Penn Station, Grand Central, Rockefeller Center, Radio City, St. Patrick's, Fifth Avenue, Park Avenue, Lexington Avenue, Central Park, and the "Met"; he would stay at the Waldorf and go to a Broadway play at the Roxy Theatre; he read the Times, the Wall Street Journal, Barron's; he loved Fred Allen, the Barrymore family, George Arliss, and Alan Ladd, and hated Bette Davis and Edward Everett Horton; he believed in the New Yorker, Robert Benchley, P. G. Wodehouse, Edward Bellamy, Joseph Conrad, Don Marquis, Dorothy Parker, William James, and Laurence Sterne; he claimed to know Oscar Levant personally; he ate in the Russian Tea Room, the Carnegie Delicatessen, and Divan de Parisienne; and he said that James Thurber had once written a story about him ("Having Been Born Middle-Aged"). Nevertheless, he would always return to Times Square, just to breathe its air of freedom. It was the meeting ground, the shrine, the vessel of the true collective will of New York City—the essence of *blasé*, which affects everyone in the city from the panhandler to the professional, regardless of class, economic status, level of education, or natural abilities. I often wonder why someone hasn't created a perfume called "*Blasé*." It

Inauguration of Bond
Clothes Sign, June 18, 1948
UPI/Bettmann Newsphotos



might be made of selected petals from the fabled black rose gently crushed into a tincture of absinthe, giving it a dark, iridescent green color, and presented in a spherical black chalcedony flacon topped with an inverted teardrop of solid gold and poised gracefully on a small cube of alabaster. It would be a New York natural, "Eau de Blasé."

Reaching down and yanking me up by the arm from my sitting position on the curb, my father yelled, "Wake up!" just as a cab sped by. I had been engrossed in watching a sidewalk salesman who looked like he was right out of a New Yorker cartoon. He had an open suitcase mounted on a rickety stand that displayed three items: wind-up ladybugs, hand-painted turtles swimming in a bowl of fetid water, each with a miniature of the Empire State Building on its back, and dangling hot pink ties with your choice of four Coney Island beach scenes. Even before I could mouth the words of my current wish list, the adult "No!" was in the air, along with the usual reference to the legendary "money tree" and the notorious economic "rat hole," plus the ominous question, "Do you want to go to the hotel now?" Satisfied that he had quelled my profligacy for the moment, he turned quickly past a billboard screaming about the second great year of the hit musical "South Pacific" to resume studying the Coca Cola sign mounted high in the air at the northern end of Times Square where Seventh Avenue and Broadway meet.

Having weathered many technological changes of its exhibition mechanism, the Coke sign has remained the icon of American manna as well as the symbol of Times Square itself, and it provides the major clue to the nature of New York City as Utopia. It is not simply that Manhattan is technically an island (as Saint Thomas More described Utopia in

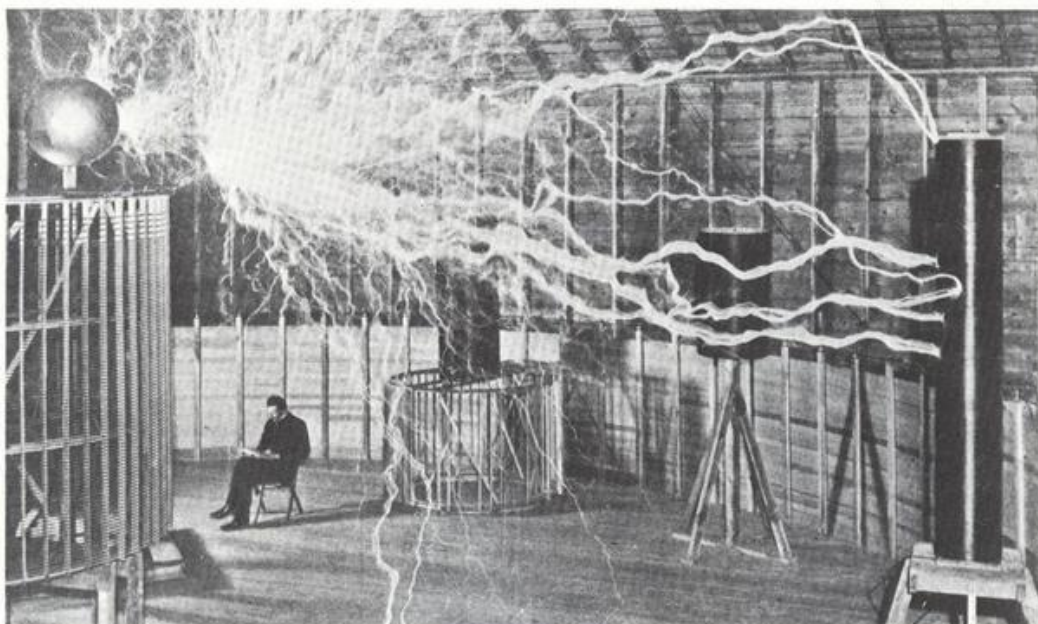
his famous story) that makes it so. I believe that what creates the social unity of the euphoric indifference of New York blasé can be seen in the Coke sign. It has sensory overload. The original sign was made of high-wattage light bulbs that were either on or off, with no subtle distinctions in between. It depended on pattern recognition. The light bulbs were close enough together so that they formed an analogue of a quantum field. Watching the apparent meandering of its fantastically complex network of recursive images was mesmerizing enough to satisfy for a lifetime the secret heart of a systems analyst or a contra-square dance freak. It demonstrated Ernst Mach's cosmological principle, which is founded on the observation that while everything in the universe rotates in space, the universe as a whole shows no observable sign of rotation.

New Yorkers believe that the entity that is the city can absorb all change whether it originates from within or without. New York, unlike ancient Athens or Rome or modern Paris, is impervious to history. No individual, institution, or civilization could conquer or subsume it. This is a fundamental element in the belief system of utopia. The modern world is filled with mimics of New York style and pattern—from up-ended-stretch-limo-file-cabinet office buildings to the yet to be understood works of the electrical genius Nikola Tesla (1856–1943), the Serbo-Croatian who revolutionized the world by developing—in New York City—polyphase alternating current motors.

What makes the city different from the traditional American utopias and even from contemporary intentional communities is sensory overload. The Shaker communities, for instance, were the diametric opposite of New York City. By means of almost total sensory deprivation and suppression of sex-

Times Square, 1940

Nikola Tesla seated in his laboratory amidst artificially generated lightning
Bettmann Archive



uality, the Shakers managed to maintain unity among their members by allowing compassionate love to flourish. By contrast, New York has produced a much more conceptual but no less spiritual unity among its members by following the world vision of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. The French Jesuit scientist believed that evolution in the "noosphere" (the earth-sphere of human consciousness) would lead to a world culture that, at the "omega point," would produce a hyperpersonal consciousness who would be God. He postulated a groping profusion of life, an unbelievable constructive ingenuity of life, and a complete indifference of life toward whatever is not future and total. His principles describe to a tee the life in Times Square and, by implication, in the entire city. Teilhard de Chardin was born in Sarcenat, but he died in New York City on Easter in 1955 and is buried in the Cloisters. (He also had an arcane sense of humor: as a young student of paleoanthropology he helped create the "Piltdown Man" hoax.)

While my father continued his hypnotic vigil, gazing upon the Coke sign, my eyes wandered toward the nearby souvenir shop, which contained what seemed to me at the time a complete inventory of the items absolutely necessary to maintain my very existence. I passed quickly over an array of Mickey Mouse watches because I already had one. My eye was momentarily caught by the brass models of buildings supported by thermometers, but I moved on to a series of brightly colored ceramic ashtrays with sculptures depicting major events in the history of New York. I saw in a single glance the opening of the Brooklyn Bridge, the dedication of the Statue of Liberty, and the crowds gathering around the Trylon and the Perisphere at the 1939 World's Fair. Off to one side were a few black ashtrays with gray zeppelins, labeled simply, "Souvenir of Lakehurst, New Jersey."

On an upper tier, nestled between "Plates of the Presidents" and Chinese puzzles, was a

small assortment of hunting knives featuring a large, gleaming, bone-handled jackknife that seemed to have at least two hundred functions. Taking my eyes off it for a moment I exchanged a knowing glance that transcended the normal predator-prey relationship with the proprietor of the shop, who had just appeared in the open doorway. A large Persian cat sleeping up next to the angled glass of the front window, apparently accustomed to the noise of the street and the shop, woke up with a brief spasm of activity as the loudspeaker gave a piercing shriek and the ubiquitous Vaughn Monroe was exchanged for the even more ubiquitous Kate Smith—the moon Vaughn was racing with was finally caught sight of by Kate, just as it came over the mountain. The cat's change of position revealed a number of decorated vanity mirrors placed so that in one of them I could see the Coke sign my father was still watching, only now it was miniaturized and its permutations were reversed.

A more interesting permutation of the sign occurred on August 14, 1972—my birthday. I was working in my studio on Bromfield Street in Boston when I heard loud and continuous knocking on my door. Two men stood in the doorway. One was tall and fat with slicked-back hair. He had on a green shirt with red suspenders that held up purple pants whose cuffs draped loosely over patent-leather shoes with spats. The classic big black cigar protruded from the corner of his mouth. His companion, half his size, was more modestly attired. The large straw hat that covered most of his face was the perfect foil for his sandals and light blue polyester leisure suit. Before I could even let out a meek "Yes? What is it?" the tall one handed me a pair of tickets in the shape of a fish entitling me to attend the opening day (Easter 1973) of "Holyland, U.S.A.—Mobile,

Alabama." As I accepted the tickets, they intoned at the top of their lungs, Southern-choir style, "Jesus has sent us to get you!" Now, having been brought up a conservative Roman Catholic, I was not prepared for the Angel Gabriel in the form of two guys doing a combined imitation of Abbott and Costello and Mutt and Jeff.

Blowing a puff of smoke in my face, the big one advanced, pushing me aside, and entered my room. He turned and introduced himself as a very concerned Baptist minister. "And, of course, I would like you to meet my personal architect, Dewey," he added, gesturing toward the little guy. The architect, having somehow discovered my religious genetic programming, said that although he was a Presbyterian there was some Catholic blood in his family, which gave him strong leanings "in that direction." While the architect was explaining why they had come to see me and that they were in a great hurry, just stopping over on their way to Jerusalem, the minister stepped into the hall. After a minute he returned with a briefcase. They had heard (I never discovered how) of my recent installation at Boston's Institute of Contemporary Art. The installation was a large environmental sculpture called *New Jerusalem*. I followed the text of the Book of Revelation as if I were reading architectural specifications. The result was an image of the utopian celestial city contained within a six-foot cube.

The two wanted to buy it from me and have it shipped to Mobile and set up on the site where they were in the process of building an amusement park based on the Bible (B.J.A.T., or Before Jim and Tammy). It was to be, they said excitedly, a preview of things to come. In fact, they soon revealed that they planned to have the sculpture reproduced as a hundred-foot cube. The minister, taking a long drag on his cigar, suddenly had an



Laffoley, *New Jerusalem*
Proposal, detail

inspiration. "Say," he shouted, "do you think you could figure out some way to actually levitate 'Heaven,' oh, about twenty or thirty feet off the ground?" You know how when someone asks you a very provocative question, delivered so fast that you don't have time to frame a cogent answer, you say the first thing that comes into your mind, usually some monosyllabic inanity? "Sure," I said. Bending closer to my face, the minister added, "Could you also come up with a mechanism to part our 'Red Sea' . . . every three hours?" Answering even faster this time, I produced two words: "No problem." Then the architect, consulting out loud with his friend, said: "He's been honest with us, so let's be honest with him." "Paul—it's Paul, isn't it?" the minister continued, not bothering to wait. "We may have been just a mite premature about our opening date. What we really have is about 500,000 acres of plowed-out shoreland in Mobile and a fifteen-foot-tall cast-acrylic statue of Jesus lying at the side of the site, and frankly we're stumped as to how to plan the damn thing." The architect asked if I'd ever done any urban design. "Not lately," I replied, "but it is a hobby of mine."

Suddenly they stopped talking to me and started looking around my studio. I happened to be starting a triptych illustrating Dante's *Divine Comedy*. At the top of one of the canvases were the words "primum mobile." Seeing that they muttered, "It's a sign—definitely a sign." Thinking fast so as not to lose their interest, I interjected: "What if you used the Star of David as the basic road plan? The six triangles could be where you locate the New Testament rides and the six adjacent spaces outside the star could be where you put the Old Testament rides. A replica of the wall of Jerusalem could enclose the whole thing and provide gate control.

The central hexagon would be fine for a huge conversion temple, surrounded, of course, by the concession stands and bathrooms. On top of the conversion temple would be the best place to mount the statue of Jesus, which could be lit up inside like a combination Christmas tree and lighthouse." At that, four eyes turned heavenward as my visitors dropped to their knees in prayer. "Praise Jesus! The Holy Spirit has descended. We are on fire and taken up out of the bondage of ignorance and indecision." The reverend stopped and motioned to me. "Brother Paul, will you join us on the floor?" After first surveying the carpet to find a spot relatively clear of the junk and small pieces of rolled-up masking tape that had collected over the years, I knelt down obligingly and joined hands with them. The minister (who admitted that he had only recently been born again—two Halloweens ago) continued the prayer, begging the Lord's forgiveness for his momentary lapse of faith when I mentioned the word "hobby." His was a concerned ministry with a serious calling: "There will be no place in Holyland for any backsliding Jack-a-Napes."

As we rose from the floor Billy Bob the minister reached for his briefcase and began to shuffle some papers inside it. Dewey the architect resumed his in-depth examination of my studio. "Have you ever thought of preserving your studio after you pass over to the other side?" he mused. "Well," I said, "I have always fantasized that just before I kicked it I would contact one of those human taxidermy services in California. They stuff your skin and donate your organs to medical science. The price includes a tape recording of some characteristic, funny saying of yours, like 'Oh, no!' or 'It's been done already!' or something like that, which people who knew you can play at their leisure. I'd ask

I thought to myself, "Finally I'm in on the ground floor of something with which I can personally penetrate the kitsch barrier, like Andy Warhol did with his Marilyn Monroe portraits."

A view of the hole drilled into the Empire State Building by the U.S. Army bomber that rammed the giant structure in a fog on July 28, 1945. Part of the bomber wreckage hangs from the 78th floor. UPI/Bettmann Newsphotos

that my body be positioned in front of an unfinished work as if I were in the act of painting and that the entire studio, just as you see it now, be filled floor to ceiling with molten clear lucite and left to harden. The lucite block could then be removed from the building, polished on all six surfaces, and displayed." "Oh my! That would make a lovely exhibit," cooed Dewey. "Perhaps some time in the future at Holyland. . . . What do you think, Billy Bob?" The minister brushed the question aside, saying that they had business to attend to *now*. He had laid out different kinds of contracts, all in triplicate with the places to sign my name marked with large red Xs. Off to the right was a check for \$10,000. He laid one hand on my shoulder and with the other slowly moved the check closer to me as my signing proceeded, saying, "This is just a retainer for now and it includes money for your trip. In two weeks I'll be reserving suites at Disney World in Orlando for our planning retreat with people from all over the world." He then whispered, making sure Dewey didn't hear, "You're in for ten percent—skimmed right off the top." As I signed the last sheet of paper, I thought to myself, "Finally I'm in on the ground floor of something with which I can personally penetrate the kitsch barrier, like Andy Warhol did with his Marilyn Monroe portraits. What a birthday present!"

As the reverend closed his briefcase with a decisive snap and prepared to leave, I asked innocently, "Why do you have a large Coca Cola sign on your briefcase?" Like the famous Cheshire cat who could at will become nothing but a grin, Billy Bob was beaming as he slowly rotated his briefcase in space so that I could see the other side up close. I was stunned. My lower jaw went slack; if I had been "Plastic Man" it would have bounced on the floor a couple of times

before returning to its proper position. Here was the work of a true kitsch master (he said he had had it made up especially from his own design), which would have made Madison Avenue *and* Warhol jealous. I believe that if this sign and Coca Cola had been invented 2,000 years earlier the entire course of Western history would have been altered. There would have been no Roman Empire, no need for the Crusades, the Reformation, or the Inquisition, no trial of Galileo, no Protestant denominations, no Vatican I or II. The mind that conceived this sign, nay, icon, had to be as brilliant as Saint Francis of Assisi (inventor of the Nativity crèche), Leonardo da Vinci, P. T. Barnum, and Colonel Tom Parker—all rolled into one. In a single stroke, Billy Bob had moved the kitsch barrier way beyond where I could ever hope to break it. The sign, which graphically resembled the Coke slogan of the time, read simply, "Jesus—He's the real thing."

"Shrieeek!" And again the music changed. This time Buddy Clark was singing about how limited his interests in pyromania were. I had been looking at a framed photograph near the vanity mirrors. It depicted something my father had talked about a lot. The caption read: "Pilot penetrates pier!—New York City, 1945. Dense fog and the pilot's resulting confusion caused the broadside crash of a B-25, 975 feet above ground, into the Empire State, world's tallest building. Many crash victims were workers in a war-time relief charity office. Out the other side, the burning cockpit plummets onto unsuspecting crowds on the street below." The picture showed most of a B-25 hanging out in space from the surface of the building as if defying gravity. "I want that for my room," I said to myself. Just then I caught sight of a curious image in one of the adjacent mirrors. Besides the Coke sign, I could now see what

looked like a giant peanut, rotating as it went, resembling for all the world a ballet dancer in pirouette, coming straight at us. I wheeled around and realized the peanut was headed right for my father, who was still deep in contemplation. I shouted, "Look out! Look out! Dad, a peanut's gonna get ya!" He turned in the direction of my most familiar voice and started to ask, "Wot the hell are you say . . ." Wham! Two bodies collided, one soft and pliable, the other hard and brittle. They hit the sidewalk like two intersecting conga lines.

An extremely amused crowd had gathered. The peanut, in his awkward, bulky costume, was the first to be helped up. Someone offered a hand to my father but he refused it (not unusual). He got up, brushed himself off, grabbed my hand, and prepared to leave as swiftly as possible. Just then a cavernous voice implored from behind us, "Wait! Do you know who I am?" and continued before we could answer, "I'm Mr. Peanut—the spirit of Planter's peanuts." My father began literally dragging me around the corner onto 42nd Street so we would be headed toward Eighth Avenue, but Mr. Peanut caught up with us. "Wouldn't you like a free sample of Planter's peanuts?" "No thank you," said my father with feigned politeness. I was shocked. Next to oysters, he liked peanuts best. Mr. Peanut was now alongside us. "I don't often run into out of towners," he said, trying to be convivial. My father, extremely annoyed, began to lie, "We're not from out . . ." But before he could finish I piped up with, "We're from Boston, Massachusetts, and this is my first day in New York City." "Is this your son?" asked Mr. Peanut. Scarlet-faced and at the limit of his patience, my father clenched his teeth as hard as he could and said through them, "Yes." Turning away from Dad, Mr. Peanut offered me a bag of peanuts





and asked what grade I was in in school and what subject I liked best. I thanked him for the peanuts and answered dutifully that I had just started the fourth grade and that I liked science period best because it was easy. Mr. Peanut looked puzzled. I explained that I had been assigned to report to my class on gravity, but since my father had told me that gravity doesn't exist I didn't have to do anything. At that the small group of on-lookers burst into laughter. My father was now at full boil. Mr. Peanut, sensing that he had somehow provoked an unpleasant situation, showed signs of wanting to find fresh meat to carve. He said he really liked Boston and had even stayed in someone's backyard one night in a town some miles south of the city. Taunton, it was, he remembered. "But now are there any questions about the city you would like to ask me before I go?" "Yes," I said. "What is Nathan's?" "That's easy," he replied. "Go across the square and just beyond that building [he was pointing to the New York Times Building] you'll find the best hot dogs in the world. I was just there myself before I bumped into your father. Anything else?" With my eyes even wider than usual, I asked, "Why do they call Times Square a square if it really looks like a triangle?" "Ah lad," he said, resorting to a fake Irish brogue, "I think ye be pullin' me leg. Goodbye, goodbye." In a wink his jaunty Johnny Walker top hat, monocle, walking stick, and spats danced away and melted back into the crowd. I never saw him again, though each year when I returned to Times Square I would look for him.

"Joe, Joe Dimaggio, we want you for our side," sang the piercing female voice of the lead singer for Les Brown and His Band of Renown as my father began pulling me out of the entrance of another souvenir shop, this time specializing in baseball memorabilia.

"But aren't we going the wrong way?" I asked, pointing to the northeast. "I thought you said Radio City was that way." "I don't want to hear it," my father snorted. He was angry. "One more word and it won't be the hotel room, it'll be your house." Whenever my father was upset with me he would refer to the home he shared with my mother and me as my house, as if it belonged only to me. He could never get used to living in a suburban house. Even when he had to mow the lawn he would keep his three-piece business suit on. Often I would hear, "We've only got one kid. Why can't we bring him up in a hotel like everyone in New York does?" My mother would either glare at him in silence or suggest they go for a drive. Under the circumstances, the car became my father's real home. Night after night, right after a quick supper, he would make us drive around until bedtime in his black Buick. Only when he realized that I had to do homework was I let off the hook. Somehow he never deviated from Buicks. When he couldn't afford to buy new, he would buy as late a model as possible. When he could buy new, he traded in each year. A Buick, he claimed, gave a more comfortable ride than a Chrysler, and was not as déclassé as a Cadillac.

Realizing that I was right about the direction just added fuel to the fire—he never liked to be contradicted by anyone and, as the years went by, certainly not by me. Instead of doing an about-face on the sidewalk, for some reason he led me straight across the street, right through heavy traffic. He had spotted something. Not wanting to displease him any further I acquiesced without a word. As my right foot left the curb and was about to make contact with the surface of the road, I noticed that one of the Empire State Building turtles was moving in the gutter



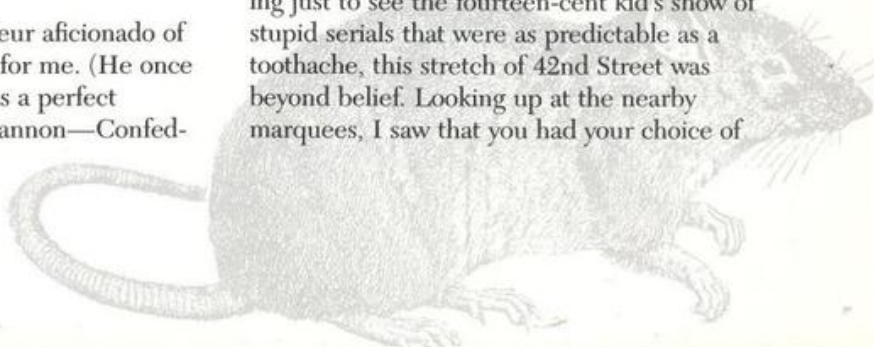
below me. Either it had escaped from the sidewalk salesman, or, more likely, someone had bought it and let it go. Anyway, it was making a break for freedom as fast as a turtle could go. And I was about to squash it flat! As luck would have it, out of a nearby storm drain came a rat to the rescue, carefully picking the turtle up with accomplished jaws. Now this was not an ordinary domestic roof rat (*rattus rattus*) but a Norway rat (*rattus Norvegicus*). How I knew the difference was the result of my attempting to earn a merit badge in Cub Scouts. I chose Native Wild Animal Identification because I thought it would be easy—I could spot and describe the habits of an elk, a white-tailed deer, a moose, or a black bear as well as the next person. Until I realized that the only wildlife in my neighborhood consisted of Skippy, the old fox terrier who lived next door and was about to be put “to sleep,” and the raccoon that occasionally ate out of our garbage can in the backyard at night.

My Uncle Ralph, an amateur aficionado of the bizarre, saved the day for me. (He once created a ring gun that was a perfect miniature of a Civil War cannon—Confed-

erate side—that you fired by touching the powder hole with a lit cigarette. After much cajoling, I got him to admit he had used it—just once, in a barroom fight.) When I thought all was lost, he handed me a U.S. Public Health Service rap sheet on “The Field Identification of Domestic Rodents.” On the day of our presentations other kids talked about black-tailed jack rabbits, beavers, foxes, bobcats, otters, or woodchucks. One kid had even been to California and seen where the antelopes play. When it was my turn I talked about rats. My big finish was my description of the Norway rat, which sometimes weighs in at three and a half pounds and is close to two feet long.

Nicknamed “the Piper,” no doubt in an ironic homage to the legendary musician of Hamelin, the Norway rat can enter the most impregnable of city buildings. First, it slips into the building’s sewer main from the street. Next it finds the soil stack and gnaws through the stack wall with its powerful incisors. Then, taking a deep breath and holding it, it climbs up the soil stack, or swims if necessary, to enter the building, finally emerging through the waste outlet of the first convenient toilet bowl, whether or not it is in use at the time. I did not receive my merit badge because of what they called technical considerations. I did, however, accept a standing ovation from Wolfpack 43.

As we reached the other side of the street, I suddenly realized that the section of 42nd Street between Seventh and Eighth avenues was almost entirely lined with movie theaters. To someone who had to wait in endless, sweaty, screaming lines every Saturday morning just to see the fourteen-cent kid’s show of stupid serials that were as predictable as a toothache, this stretch of 42nd Street was beyond belief. Looking up at the nearby marquees, I saw that you had your choice of





Mothra

cartoons and "Pete Smith" shorts, a puff-piece starring Bob Hope and Lucille Ball, and *This Gun for Hire*, based on a Graham Greene novel and featuring Alan Ladd and Veronica Lake, which I had just seen in Boston and was my favorite at the time. The movie had made such an impression on me and my friends that we would act it out. But that day on 42nd Street I was getting a foretaste of "overchoice," which would not become a developed social phenomenon until the 1970s.

When I came to live in New York during the early 1960s I spent my first week methodically going to every one of these 42nd Street theaters every day from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 a.m. the next morning. Admission in those days was only forty-five cents (for all day, not per show). I haunted theaters that specialized in my favorite genres: horror and Japanese science fiction. *Mothra* comes to mind. It is the story of twin Japanese girls who are extremely attractive. They are also but seven inches tall. They dance around all day in the woods singing songs native to their island Sumisu, which is south of Tokyo. A New York fortune hunter on holiday spots and captures them, and they end up in a bird cage doing three shows a night at Toots Shors's. Things are not so bad until the night an inebriated customer, thinking they're larger than they are, makes a pass—something about a ménage à trois. At this the girls telepathically call their hometown taxi service to get them out of there. The scene then shifts back to the island, where we see a fifty-foot egg crack open and a gigantic moth emerge. Using the girls' singing as a sonar homing beam the moth heads across the United States, making a pit stop at the Grand Canyon. When it reaches Manhattan, it flies right over Washington Square, where everyone waves to it, goes up Fifth Avenue, and takes a left at 34th Street, where one of its wings slices off the top of the Empire State Building. It finally comes in for a landing right on top of Madison Square Garden, the Post Office, and Penn Station, crushing them all flat. When the commotion outside distracts the crowd, the twins open their bird cage and rush out. They hop on Mothra's back and, still singing, are soon out of sight. Often the armrests in the front rows of these theaters would be missing, and sleepy patrons could stretch out and catch up on their rest. Concessioners



sold refreshments right in the orchestra, as they still do in European movie houses. Today, of course, with the proliferation of VCRs that let a person watch nearly 900 movies a year and still have time to eat and sleep, many of those theaters have degenerated into nothing more than peep shows.

I thought my father was headed for the entrance to the freak show on the south side of 42nd Street. I went in there once by myself. It only cost a dime. The lady at the ticket window seemed surprised that I even wanted to come in. There were actually no freaks left to watch, just some old faded pictures with hand-scrawled verbal apologies and references to the troubles Tod Browning had with the movie industry in the 1930s. Since I was the only person there I explored the downstairs. Way in the back behind a drawn curtain was a very small stage on which a yellowing poster lay askew: "Tiny Tim, next performance at 2:00 p.m., song requests taken," it said.

But as it turned out we were headed next door to a very small joke shop. You know the kind, where they sell rubber snakes and whoopee cushions. My father positioned me right in front of the window so that I couldn't avoid seeing what he was pointing to. He said emphatically, "See, that's what I'm talking about. That's how the universe works and it does not need the concept of gravity."

I know I hinted about my father and gravity before, but I'll say it right out now. As long as I knew him, my father never believed in gravity. And I don't know if he ever did. He didn't believe in gravity the way other men don't believe in Santa Claus: it's nice folklore that's not harmful unless you take it too seriously. Growing up, I didn't know you were *supposed* to believe in gravity. It was a subject that just never came up in conversa-

tion with my friends. We were busy playing cars and guns and throwing cherry bombs down wells. The only analogous situation I can imagine would be that of a child growing up in one of those flat-earth utopias that existed in the Midwest in the nineteenth century, or, more currently, of a child living in the home of Charles K. Johnson, who is the president of the International Flat Earth Research Society in Lancaster, California.

Now I'm not saying my father was a dingbat. He was a brilliant man, a veritable genius when it came to trusts, estates, and tax law. As a very young man, he practically single-handedly brought his bank through the Crash of 1929 and the Depression in the black, while other banks just folded forever. He invented business systems and created careers for other people besides himself. On the side he played the piano, sang, and was a professional-level violoncellist. I'm not even saying he was wrong about gravity. He would claim that Einstein and the quantum physicists were moving closer day by day to his position. He admired Babson, who founded Babson Business College and also the Gravity Research Institute, which used to be in New Boston, New Hampshire. He would often take me to see the Institute's exhibits of antigravity and perpetual-motion devices, although I was only allowed to see them from outside, through a window in the main building. It must be that successful businessmen cultivate a certain orneriness, because whenever he would start losing a father-and-son argument with me, no matter what the initial subject, he would say I was becoming a dupe of the system and beginning to believe in gravity.

Right up close to the window, smack between a generous supply of imported French blue garlic chewing gum labeled *nonpareille* on the right and authentic Cape Cod salt-water

. . . whenever he would start losing a father-and-son argument with me, no matter what the initial subject, he would say I was becoming a dupe of the system and beginning to believe in gravity.

... a feeling began to creep over me that maybe it might not be such a good idea for my father to buy me the Anti-Graviton.

taffy made with real salt on the left, was a large rectangular box, painted jet black, about a foot wide by two feet long by eight inches thick (which was probably what he had seen from across the street). Slightly above the middle zone of the box was a circular opening that seemed to me to be about six inches in diameter, inside of which a small white sphere, poised with no visible means of support, spun on its axis in a blood-red void lit from inside. The elegant lettering on a large plate of simulated brass identified the device as "The Anti-Graviton." A small white card in front of it read, "Amaze everyone as you instantly defy gravity with the flick of a switch" and, in small letters at the very bottom, "Ping-pong ball and electric fan not included."

My father was ebullient again, explaining to me how the designer of the "toy" had inadvertently hit upon the secret of the organization of the physical universe. The air jets that held the ping-pong ball in position represented the materials that each heavenly body throws off as it spins on its axis. All bodies in space, therefore, form an equilibrium in space, creating the various orbital distances and motion we observe. When I would ask him why then isn't the largest planet in the solar system closest to the sun and all the other planets lined up in descending size, or what is out at the periphery of space that holds all the forces in, he would simply state that these were wrong kinds of questions, indicative of a mind not yet free of the concept of gravity. "I'm going to buy it for your school assignment on gravity next month," he announced decisively as he marched into the shop with me trailing behind. While he completed the transaction, I watched one of the salesmen demonstrating to some older kids how to chop off their index fingers at the first joint. He was in the

act of releasing the blade of a beautifully made scale model of a guillotine when a feeling began to creep over me that maybe it might not be such a good idea for my father to buy me the Anti-Graviton.

As fate would have it, at the beginning of the fourth-grade science class I had been picked to report on the nature of gravity. Not being the stupidest kid in school, I noticed that when the teacher, Miss Purdy, spoke of gravity, it was not in the negative sense that I was accustomed to at home. Although I went to a progressive school I thought it might be a little too progressive to bring in visual aids to support a position on gravity that I began to realize was not widely held by the adults in charge. I had learned my lesson in art class the day I was brought up on charges of lack of expressiveness when they caught me producing perfect renderings of Superman and Donald Duck while the other kids were painting blobs, although we had been told *specifically* that we could do anything we wanted.

As he handed me my present, which was wrapped appropriately in black, my father could sense I was not totally enthusiastic, but he let it pass. Outside again, he informed me that after the show at Radio City we would attend the recording of the Fred Allen Show, where Fred would autograph my present with chalk—"just like a blackboard." He smiled, hoping to lighten my mood.

I tucked the package carefully under my arm, as if I were carrying a time bomb, and we started moving east again on the south side of 42nd Street. The crowds thickened, no doubt because it was the end of the lunch break. To orient myself, every now and then I had to look up over the heads of the oncomers or sideways through openings in the crowd. It was then that I saw it. Way off in the distance

★ **EXTREME**
THE DAILY TRIBUNE
GOVT. ADMITS ANTI-GRAVITY
"WE'VE BEEN MAKING FLYING SAUCERS FOR YEARS"
SAYS PRESIDENT IN NEWS CONFERENCE

Reprinted from the September, 1927
issue of Science and Invention.

Gravity Nullified

Quartz Crystals Charged by High Frequency Currents Lose Their Weight

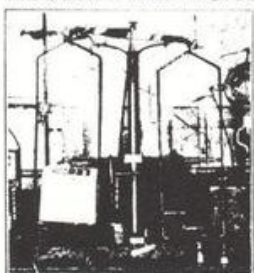
ALTHOUGH some remarkable achievements have been made with short-wave low power transmitters, radio experts and amateurs have recently decided that short-wave transmission had reached its ultimate and that no vital improvement would be made in this line. A short time ago, however, two young European experimenters working with ultra short-waves, have made a discovery that promises to be of primary importance to the scientific world.

The discovery was made about six weeks ago in a newly established central laboratory of the Nerssartadinn-Werke in Darrdein, Poland, by Dr. Kowsky and Engineer Frost. While experimenting with the constants of very short waves, carried on by means of quartz resonators, a piece of quartz which was used, suddenly showed a clearly altered appearance. It was easily seen that in the center of the crystal, especially when a constant temperature not exceeding ten degrees C. (50 degrees Fahrenheit) was maintained, milky cloudiness appeared which gradually developed to complete opacity. The experiments of Dr. Meissner, of the Telefunken Co., along similar lines, according to which quartz crystals, subjected to high frequency currents clearly showed air currents which led to the construction of a little motor based on this principle. A work of eager experimenting finally led Dr. Kowsky and Engineer Frost to the explanation of the phenomenon, and further experiments showed the unexpected possibilities for technical uses of the discovery.

Some statements must precede the explanation. It is known at least in part, that quartz and some other crystals of similar atomic nature, have the property when exposed to potential excitation in a definite direction, of stretching and contracting; and if one uses rapidly changing potentials, the crystals will change the electric waves into mechanical oscillations. This *piezo electric* effect, shown in Rochelle salt crystals by which they may be made into sound-producing devices such as loud speakers, or reversely into microphones, also shows the results in this direction. This effect was clearly explained in August, 1925 *Radio Arc* and December, 1919 *Electrical Experimenter*. These oscillations are extremely small, but have nevertheless their technical use in a quartz crystal wave-meter and in maintaining



a constant wavelength in radio transmitters. By a special arrangement of the excitation of the crystal in various directions, it may be made to stretch or increase in length and



will not return to its original size. It seems as if a dispersal of electrons from a molecule resulted, which, as it is irreversible, changes the entire structure of the crystal, so that it cannot be restored to its former condition.

The stretching out, as we may term this strange property of the crystal, explains the impairment of its transparency. At the same time a change takes place in its specific

gravity. Testing it on the balance showed that after connecting the crystal to the high tension current, the arm of the balance on which the crystal with the electrical connections rests, rose into the air. The illustration, Fig. 3, shows this experiment.

This pointed the way for further investigation and the determination as to how far the reduction of the specific gravity could be carried out. By the use of greater power, finally to the extent of several kilowatts and longer exposure to the action, it was found eventually that from a little crystal, 5 by 2 by 1.5 millimeters, a non-transparent white body measuring about ten centimeters on the side resulted, or increased about 20 times in length on any side (see Fig. 4). The transformed crystal was so light that it carried the whole apparatus with itself upwards, along with the weight of twenty-five kilograms (55 lbs.) suspended from it and floating free in the air. On exact measurement and calculation, which on account of the excellent apparatus in the Darrdein laboratory could be readily carried out, it was found that the specific gravity was reduced to a greater amount than the change in volume would indicate. Its weight had become practically negative.

There can be no doubt that a beginning has been made toward overcoming gravitation. It is to be noted, however, that the law of conservation of energy is absolutely unchanged. The energy employed in treating the crystal, appears as the counter effect of gravitation. Thus the riddle of gravitation is not fully solved as yet, and the progress of experiments will be followed further. It is, however, the first time that experimentation with gravitation, which hitherto has been beyond the pale of all such research, has become possible, and it seems as if there were a way discovered at last to explain the inter-relations of gravity with electric and magnetic forces, which connection, long sought for, has never been demonstrated. This report appears in a reliable German journal, "Radio Umkleen."



Don't fail to see our next issue regarding this marvelous invention.



61

someone was coming straight toward us carrying a large sign. I turned to my father and asked, "What's that sign up ahead say?" I could see he was chuckling, probably telling jokes to himself, as he often did. "What? What are you talking about?" As the sign came nearer, I was able to make it out in all its histrionic splendor. As I remember it now, it was actually a rather simple sign, about two feet high by three wide, held aloft by a two-by-four, with a mixture of red and black glossy block letters emblazoned on a background of stark, flat white. To the left of the letters was a crude drawing of the earth, in black outline, about to be struck by an equally crude red comet whose sweeping tail extended out beyond the limits of the sign as if its origin were in another dimension. To the right side were a thin black cross and a red silhouette of a hand, raised with the palm forward like a traffic cop's. The large red letters at the top spelled out one word, "Repent." Below that, also in red, but in smaller letters, was the warning, "The end of the world is near!" The message near the bottom of the sign, in even smaller black letters, was less emphatic but more descriptive: "I have come again, this time not to save but to judge."

As the sign came closer the person carrying it was revealed. He held the two-by-four forward from his body in a gesture of defiance and a little to the right so it didn't hide his face, the face—no! the vision—of a young man in his early thirties. His face was gaunt but with perfect features, an aquiline nose and deep-set blue eyes. He wore a full, flowing, chestnut-colored beard, and his hair, of a slightly lighter color, parted in the middle, cascaded down his cheeks to his shoulders and hung down his back in straggling wisps. It looked like a woman's hair, but in a style of some period other than the

1940s. His hands were bony and sensitive, and the skin on his face was so smooth and pale it seemed to glow from within. I would not see a face like that—sort of a cross between a young Peter O'Toole and a classical statue, with a look of militant midwestern innocence—again until the early 1960s, when I saw my first hippy. He was about six feet tall and slender. His pure white muslin tunic almost touched his sandals; it had large, billowy sleeves that you could see up into, and a low, round neckline that exposed his long alabaster neck and a necklace of silver coins threaded on a piece of string. The whole thing was belted at the waist with a length of hemp rope and draped with a loose outer garment of electric blue velvet that went once around the tunic, up over the left shoulder, then down the back and onto the ground like a train.

Before he noticed me looking at him, the man was walking straight ahead, breathing loudly and rhythmically through his nostrils with his mouth shut tight, and his expression was vacillating between an intense, angry stare—you know that stare, so penetrating it's supposed to strike fear into the hearts of the mediocre—and a full *sankapu* of complete resignation, his head lifting heavenward and his eyes continuing the movement. In an instant we were standing stock still within inches of each other, I looking up in wonderment at him, he gazing down upon me with the benign and stoic majesty of a Buddha, while passersby in both directions managed to sidestep us without once breaking their stride. We were like two ghosts mistakenly assigned to haunt the same castle, meeting by accident among the living inhabitants.

Because of all that had already happened that day, for a moment I had absolutely no idea who he was or why he was. The moment seemed to drag on into an eternity. Invisible

filaments connected our eyes. Finally, the sheer unknowingness of it all made me break the silence. "Who, who are you?" I stammered, still clutching my black box. This was my polite way of saying, "What are you?" At this his face began slowly to lose its stern and foreboding posture and break into the most warm and loving smile (tinged, of course, with a sense of complete superiority) I had ever seen. Releasing the grip of one of his hands from the post, he extended it little by little straight out in space until the palm was about an inch above my head. As he lowered it to touch me his rich, almost operatic baritone voice resonated throughout my body. "And a little child shall lead them. I will spare the world for now." As the words rang in my ears and I felt the soothing touch of his hand on my head, I began to realize who this was. A memory from the dim primordial past worked its way with great effort up, up through the eons of time that had elapsed since I was but a drooling infant of seven until it emerged into the mind of my present mature and practically adult self of nine.

It was just before we left for my first communion. My father was about to hand me a small but very plump book, saying, "Here, you'll need this." The book had black leatherette covers that held about 1,500 pages of the thinnest paper I had ever seen, each page edged in pink. There were lots of shiny scarlet ribbons for page markers and lavish illustrations of the Bible in both black and white and color, as well as songs and religious texts in Latin with English translations. The best part was that it was mine. It said so right on the front cover: "My Sunday Missal" in blood red letters raised slightly so I could feel them. During the transfer in space of this precious cargo (it was the only piece of religious equipment I ever related to) a momentary failure in the docking mechanism

of my waiting hand caused the book to plummet to the floor. As it landed on its spine it opened to page 980, which was headed, "The 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time." Above that was a black-and-white line drawing of what I was now witnessing in the flesh. Only under the picture in my missal it said that "the sun will be darkened. . . . Then men will see the Son of Man." I was *now* looking right into the face of Jesus, God, J. C., the Big One!

When I was a kid growing up in my suburban neighborhood, religion had never been a topic of discussion or interest. My mother was the one who had to tell me that my friends were Episcopalian, Jewish, Russian Orthodox, or Presbyterian. It took me nearly a whole year to realize that an Irish Catholic and an Italian Catholic held the same faith. My friends and I were more concerned with not being beaten up at recess than with anything else. My method of discriminating among my friends at that time was by their batting averages, what they ate for lunch, and how their houses smelled when I would visit.

At the time I could only liken the totally weird and eerie impact of this moment with Jesus to the very remote possibility of meeting a lineup of all the celebrities in history beginning with the Lone Ranger and Superman. But soon the moment was gone. He had passed by me in the midst of my ecstasy and resumed his former attitude and motions. For my part, I realized in a panic that my father was gone. Running forward, I spotted his familiar gray fedora riding slightly above crowd level. As I reached his side he yelled, "Will you hurry up? We have to make

the two o'clock show!" "But," I interrupted, trying to catch my breath, "I just spoke to Jesus. He won't end the world today because he likes me. So you have time to call Mom to pack a bag and meet us." "What? Oh my God," said my father, exasperated. "That guy's just some nut! Why did you pay any attention to him?" "But it *was* Jesus," I screamed. "Okay. That's it, we're leaving right now," he said with finality. Grabbing my hand, he walked me in silence back to Grand Central. With my head held low in despair and disbelief, I could not locate the origin of the song that was faintly crying, "Make the world go away . . ." My father was now carrying my present.



The ride home on the train was equal in discomfort and discommunication, except for an occasional look of disappointment from my father's soft brown eyes. He made only one comment, as the train passed through Providence: "I didn't act like

that when *my* father first took me to the city. I don't know if you'll ever be a New Yorker." He may have been silently comparing me with Stendhal, whom he hated. My father considered Stendhal one of those eternal reactive tourists of life who can never actually *be* someplace. He had read in Stendhal's diary that while Stendhal was viewing frescoes in the church of Santa Croce in Florence he had practically had a religious nervous breakdown. "He should have been more indifferent to the world in order to be truly in it, and for it," my father would explain. To him my first trip to New York was just a fizzle.

DE RERUM NATURA

1985

Oil, acrylic, ink, and lettering on canvas

73½ × 73½ in.

186.5 × 186.5 cm

Subject: The Nature of the Universe and the Human Condition

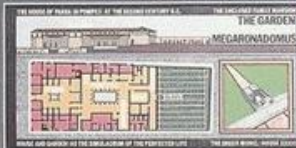
Symbol Evocation: Venus the Goddess of Creation as Free Will and Chance

Comments: The details of the life and career of the Roman poet Lucretius (Titus Lucretius Carus, ca. 99-55 B.C.) are unknown. His famous didactic poem, written in dactylic hexameter, *De Rerum Natura* (On the Nature of Things) presents the world of ontological materialism, a philosophy derived from Democritus (460-370 B.C.) and his mentor Leucippus (b. 450 B.C.). Lucretius came to his position on materialism via the ethics of Epicurus (341-270 B.C.). The resulting way of life that Lucretius preaches is not dissimilar to the contemporary vision of agnostic science.

Although originally written to blunt the fear of death and dispel the superstition of religion, *De Rerum Natura* remains for us a curious precursor of our modern (or should I say post-modern) sensibility of total fanaticism combined with a dynamic indifference toward everything. The *clinamen atomorum*, or the doctrine of chance atomic swerve as the basis of nature and free will, is echoed today by quantum theory which states that nature does not develop smoothly but rather moves by jumps in a milieu of uncertainty. Invoking a complex image of Venus in its six books, the poem states that the universe is composed of three entities: 1) infinite space without form; 2) indestructible atoms, having size, shape, and weight, but no secondary qualities; and 3) the falling of atoms in parallel lines that swerve slightly by chance. These chance swerves form worlds, minds, spirits, and the gods, but when the swerve dissipates all that remains are atoms in the void.

THE SIX BOOKS OF TITUS LUCRETIVS CARUS ADDRESSED TO MEMMIUS IN THE FORM OF DELICIOUS POETIC HONEY SPREAD AROUND THE RIM OF THE CUP OF THE HEALTH RESTORING WORMWOOD FACTS OF PAREGLY '61S

THE VOID THE INTANGIBLE THE EPICUREAN DISPELLING OF THE FEAR OF DIVINITY DE RERUM NATURE AND DEATH TO PROMOTE PEACE AND HAPPINESS. THE TANGIBLE THE ATOMS



THE SOUL IS MORTAL



NOT PHILOSOPHY BUT SUPERSTITION IS IMPOSITIVE

THE SLEEP OF THE WOUND AND THE HABIT OF LOVE

LOVE AS THE LONG RUN



CHANGES THE CHANGE ATOM SWERVE REFLECTED IN THE EXISTENCE OF FREE WILL OF ALL HUMANS THE TOTAL ABSENCE OF DESIGN IN THE UNIVERSE

VENUS RECEPTIVITY



THE PROBLEM OF THE POSSIBLE



THE CAUSE OF VISION BY THE MEANS OF SIMILACRA



THE PRINCE OF THE EAST PRESIDENT OF THE PORTUGUESE REPUBLIC



THE EARTH IS MORTAL



THE SACRIFICE OF IPHIGENIA

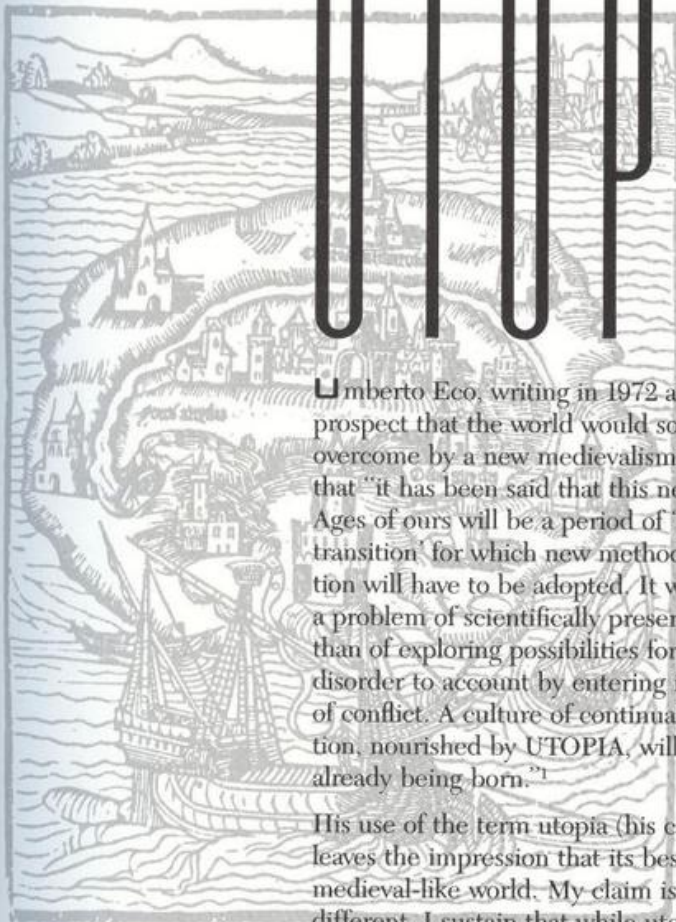


IMPENETRABILITY MARS

IMPENETRABILITY MARS

EPICURUS 341-270BC

UTOPIA



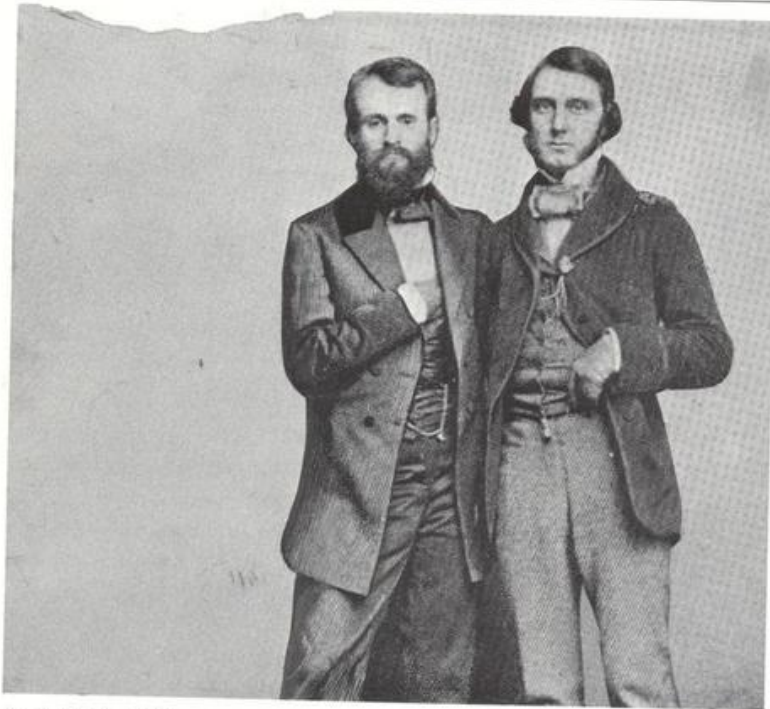
More, *Utopia*, first edition,
map of the island

Umberto Eco, writing in 1972 about the prospect that the world would soon be overcome by a new medievalism, observed that “it has been said that this new Middle Ages of ours will be a period of ‘permanent transition’ for which new methods of adaptation will have to be adopted. It will be less of a problem of scientifically preserving the past than of exploring possibilities for turning disorder to account by entering into the logic of conflict. A culture of continual readaptation, nourished by UTOPIA, will be born—is already being born.”¹

His use of the term utopia (his capitals) leaves the impression that its best context is a medieval-like world. My claim is slightly different. I sustain that while utopia has a conceptual history that can be traced from Plato’s *Republic* to the writings of Joachim of Fiore (c. 1135–1202) and finally to the book called *Utopia* written in Latin by Saint Thomas More in 1516, the true or experiential nature of utopia did not come to be understood until the eighteenth century. The intentional communities Plato described were meant as part of a strategy to preserve ancient wisdom. The three ages of Joachim—

the age of the law, the age of grace, and the age of the spirit—provided an imperative for the international Christianity which would flourish in the Gothic period. Saint Thomas More wrote *Utopia* under an ambivalent aegis. His purpose was to satirize the monstrous social injustice of the world of Henry VIII, yet in naming the concept of utopia for the first time in history and by creating many of the structural and political aspects of utopia, he testified to his intuitive sense of a world that in his age was still on the horizon of time.

It was in the eighteenth century that utopia was examined as an actual proposition. The thought of the eighteenth century was characterized by the search for the absolute through the sublime. Beauty, ugliness, comedy, tragedy, faith, imagination, and all other aspects of human existence are subsumed by the sublime into a feeling of the grandeur of reason, which enlightens the moral destiny of humankind in the face of the extremely vast or the overwhelmingly powerful. The fascination and terror exerted by the infinite totality of being transcends the comprehension of all human faculties. The merely beautiful conforms to human nature and shields us from the terror of true mystery. The sublime, which takes the aesthetic attitude (the desireless contemplation of that which is an end unto itself) toward the absolute, becomes the dream of reason. Taking the aesthetic attitude toward the totality of human existence makes the unification of the patterns of the absolute and the substance of existence possible. The medieval aspect of utopia vanishes when heaven and earth come together; the profane and the sacred combine to form something else. This something else is the symbolic environment of utopia, which can be approached through the process of the sublime. It was the mixture of the two strongest ideas



Charles Dana and George
Curtis of Brook Farm
Bettmann Archive

of the eighteenth century—perfectibility and the noble savage—that allowed the concept of utopia to develop fully. The idea of perfectibility or indefinite progress in the realms of speculative science, technology, moral behavior, and artistic expression becomes possible only if people are free from the corrupting influences of a civilization that irrationally opposes the general will.

The general will can yield common good because within the general will individual decisions miss the mark of the common good as much by excess as by deficiency; the two cancel each other out and what remains is the general will and the common good. Tolerance of individual extremes within the eighteenth-century utopian template admitted the vision of sexual unrestraint of the Marquis de Sade and the idea of the new natural woman described by Pierre

Choderlos de Laclos in his *De l'éducation des femmes* and *Liaisons dangereuses*. The eighteenth century's plea for messianic rationalism developed into the hope of creating physical utopia in the New World—the United States of the nineteenth century. There, from about 1840 to 1860, intentional communities sparked by religious revivalism flourished. If it were not for the fact that America was discovered and settled during a period of religious reformation, these communities might have had a more medieval patina. As it was, European social theorists of the early nineteenth century like Robert Owen, Charles Fourier, and Henri de Saint-Simon saw the New World of America as a vast, open land in which the “day one” of the common good could begin—the perfect physical theater in which to stage their utopian socialist plans. Already by 1787 in America the first Shaker communities had been formed and many more utopian communities were founded there in the early years of the nineteenth century. The European “creators of the future” continued to come to America, where to their surprise they found the future waiting for them.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815–1902), the American suffragette, once said, “If the nineteenth century is to be governed by the opinions of the eighteenth, and the twentieth by the nineteenth, the world will always be governed by dead men!” She pointed out one of the dilemmas of utopia—the relationship between utopia and history. The “day one” imperative, or the requirement for an impassioned present, of utopia runs into logical and necessary conflict with the process of history on several counts. Talking about utopia, characteristic of eighteenth-century Europe, is not living it, which was instead characteristic of late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century America. And yet any lived

utopia must be conceived of and planned before it can come into existence. Further, utopia must resolve any conflict of the individual wills of its participants to create a harmonious collective will. Yet this collective will is already the expression of a new organism not anticipated by the individual presence of any of the utopia's participants. Although utopias claim progress, moral and otherwise, over history-oriented civilizations, they end up being parasitic to those civilizations in temporal and spatial terms, thus vitiating the utopian prime directive of freedom of the collective will to carry out significant choice. If a utopia or intentional community is not absolutely independent of its surroundings, it is at least partly living off the energy of history-oriented civilizations. And even if a world-wide or galactic-wide utopia is created it will be parasitic to the past and the future unless it includes everyone from the past and the future who wishes to be included. The formation of a collective will at a given present may be built on the hopes of those who came before or may disrupt the future by its very presence.

These dilemmas all arise from the difficulty of reconciling that which has no history—the

collective will—with that which has only history—the circumstantial vicissitudes of civilization. Utopia, a symbolic environment of nonrepression leading to dimensional transcendence, seeks perfect continuity between the collective will and civilization. The fact that utopia seems to be conceptually incompatible with history has led to two camps of thought. On one side are those who believe that the magnitude of the moral imperative of utopia is so great that we must achieve utopia in our own lifetime. On the other side are those who consider utopia absolute fantasy. Because both positions are held with equal conviction and considered logically mutually exclusive, the debate is endlessly self-repeating and can only be resolved if a self-correlating aspect of utopia is found. To self-correlate means to organize a set of elements by finding correspondences within that set that are without reference to anything outside that set. The only aspect of utopia that both sides of the debate could theoretically discuss is the space of utopia. The set of elements that constitute utopian space are the subjective feeling of the space, its dimensional structure, and the nature of the energy distribution within it.

Shakers near Lebanon, New York, their mode of worship
Bettmann Archive



The combination of the aesthetic opposites of the image of the abstract and the image of the real yields the primary quality of utopian palpability, which is a meeting of the sense of death with the sense of life.

To get some idea of utopian space as a personal experience, imagine that you have inadvertently fallen out of an airplane on a moonless night over some unknown part of the earth at an altitude you cannot determine. As you swiftly plummet to the terra incognita below, you hear nothing but the rush of air against your body and your own screaming. Your mood oscillates with the rapidity of a pulsating cesium atom between ecstasy and fear as you approach your own fin-de-millennium. But suddenly there is an unexpected calm in your mind and all you can remember for some reason is one of those amusing stories I have told you about my father and me when I was a kid. The one that you remember, appropriately enough, is "My Father and the End of the World Man."

Wham! You land right on your back, assuming every bone in your body is broken and wondering why you are still alive. You lie there not daring to move, not knowing where you are in the pitch blackness. The only thing you think you know is my attitude toward the reality or fantasy of utopia. But since you are out in the middle of nowhere, with no one to help and unwilling to move a muscle, you cannot be sure of anything. You fall into a troubled but surprisingly sound sleep. In the morning when you wake your eyes see nothing but pure blue. Because you will not risk moving your head you experience the sensation of being immersed in pure light-blue space with nothing to orient you. But suddenly you hear the sound of an oncoming engine and the wail of a continuous and raucous horn. Forgetting yourself for a moment, you lift your head and realize, first of all, that you are spread-eagled, belly-up, with the sun behind you, in the middle of an open highway that cuts through a flat desert area, and secondly, that a monstrous semi going about 120 m.p.h. is bearing down on you; it is

so close you know it cannot stop in time. Throwing caution to the wind, you roll to the side of the highway and the mindless black leviathan speeds by. Delighted to discover you are unharmed, you hail the next vehicle you see. "It seems you landed on U.S. Highway 80 last night, but around here we call it the Dwight D. Eisenhower. You're in the middle of the Great Salt Lake Desert. I'm headed into Salt Lake City, and since I drive right by I can drop you off at the airport. By the way, would you like to stay for a while and see our big tabernacle?" You thank the driver and ask him if it's out of his way. "No, I'm on my way there myself." Curious about how he could tell that you had fallen from the sky at night, you ask how he knew. He shrugs it off with, "I just somehow know everything that goes on around here. I've been here a long time." To pass the time he starts talking about the Mayan Indians and textiles from Peru. You say casually that you are from Manchester, New York. "Is that so? I came from there myself, quite a while ago. Say, what's your name?" You tell him your name and ask him his. "Well, I don't have a fancy European-sounding name like yours. Folks just call me 'Plain Old Joe'—Joe Smith."

The Dimensional Structure of Utopian Space

I am postulating that utopian space refers to a symbolic environment and can be described in the integrated states of a function that has being and becoming as its limits. I identify becoming with the total fourth dimensional realm, and being with the total fifth dimensional realm.

The combination of the aesthetic opposites of the image of the abstract and the image of the real yields the primary quality of utopian palpability, which is a meeting of the sense of death with the sense of life. The image of the

THE CRISIS,

OR THE CHANGE FROM ERROR AND MISERY, TO TRUTH AND HAPPINESS.

1832.

IF WE CANNOT YET

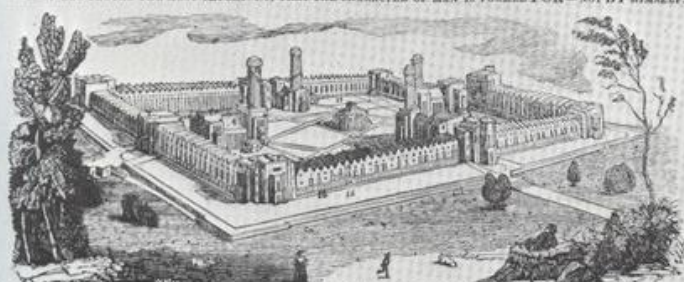
LET US ENDEAVOUR



RECONCILE ALL OPINIONS,

TO UNITE ALL HEARTS.

IT IS OF ALL TRUTHS THE MOST IMPORTANT, THAT THE CHARACTER OF MAN IS FORMED FOR—NOT BY HIMSELF.



Design of a Community of 2,000 Persons, founded upon a principle, commended by Plato, Lord Bacon, Sir T. More, & R. Owen.

EDITED BY
ROBERT OWEN AND ROBERT DALE OWEN.

London:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY J. EAMONSON, 15, CHICHESTER PLACE,
GRAY'S INN ROAD.

STRANGE, PATERNOSTER ROW. PURKISS, OLD COMPTON STREET
AND MAY BE HAD OF ALL BOOKSELLERS.

Title page from *The Crisis*
by Robert Owen and his son

abstract is flatness and was first defined visually by artists like Mondrian, Malevich, and Kandinsky. This image of flatness has become almost an equivalent for the nature of death itself, i.e., that which is beyond communication of the familiar sort. At the other end, the image of hyperrealism, begun in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s, has become the most recent candidate for the equivalent of the verisimilitude of life. I

am not saying that these are the only images available to describe the abstract and the real; however, they can be viewed as the culmination of two trends begun in the eighteenth century. What is necessary, certainly, is some vision of the real and the abstract from the point of view of the history of art.

Utopian palpability breaks through the long history of Renaissance space. Even the space-time continuum developed by Einstein and Minkovskij as the final phase of the Newtonian revolution remains within the traditional European aesthetic. Cartesian coordinates in the guise of the space-time continuum still impose a monarchical and hierarchical matrix on the ultimate democracy of natural space. Utopian space has no up, down, in, out, back, forth, or left-right symmetry. It is essentially natural space and in that way is analogous to Rousseau's concept of natural man. Utopian space is mental and physical space, and the two aspects are continuous with each other.

When Jackson Pollock said "I am nature" he showed a mind capable of giving expression to utopian space. Reacting to the vast geography of the New World, which cannot be measured by the pace of a human stride, and contrary to the sensibility of Renaissance perspective applied to landscape, Pollock evoked the openness and infiniteness of a space that connects the vast wild reaches of the universe, and then, with perfect continuity, makes quantum jumps through energy states to penetrate the very heart of the atom.

The Nature of Energy Distribution Within Utopian Space

In light of recent attempts by contemporary culture advocates to reconnect the New World innovations of America with the Old World traditions of Europe, utopian



Odd object in the skies over Leadville, Colorado, photographed on June 4, 1960

space must be carefully distinguished from general attacks on American culture, such as that it lacks form, a sense of beauty, and a natural elitism—elements always sacred to European art.

A clue for understanding the general European attitude should be taken from the attitude some of the French have had toward the energy of utopian space all along. As we have seen, utopian space and its energy, although conceived in eighteenth-century Europe, were actually realized as an expressed fact in America of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. America thereby fostered the creation of a true international space that no part of the world can gainsay. The American Revolution could occur without deviation of purpose because of the utopian space of America. The Irish statesman Edmund Burke (1729–1797) defended the American Revolution, while criticizing the French. In his view both revolutions were based in the same conservatism. The American rebellion was fought to preserve traditional rights and liberties. The French Revolution tried to destroy tradition in the name of an imaginary ideal. But what the movements did not share was the same concept of space. If its nature is heeded, utopian space, being natural space, will allow even political change to come about in a safe manner, without the particular changes becoming destructive to the instigators of change. The French Revolution, which tried to imitate the American, fell short of the mark because of the nature of mental and physical space current in France at the time, notwithstanding the importuning of thinkers like Rousseau. Even a century after the revolution, Gustave Eiffel, who modeled himself after American entrepreneurs of the day, completed his tower project for the Paris World's Fair of 1889 against vehement aes-

thetic opposition led by such eminent intellectuals as Guy de Maupassant, Alexandre Dumas, Sully Prudhomme, the Comte de Liste, and Charles Gounod. The view from the tower, like the view from a Montgolfier balloon or a modern jet plane, is Paris seen through the energy of utopian space. Marcel Duchamp and Yves Kline are other examples of men who had no problem maintaining their sense of Europe while expressing the energy of utopian space.

The energy I am referring to is energy that is active or passive without reference to position or means of propagation. Its presence, as a modality of meta-energy, is manifested as a variation in fecundation, rather than as power to do work. Each measured unit of utopian space (an artificial distinction) would be like an ideal Wheatstone bridge, which possesses infinite resistance to an infinite electrical power supply, making the power of the space undetectable unless the space itself is entered. Other analogies for utopian space include the nineteenth-century concept of ether, considered the medium that allowed light waves to propagate, and the zero-point energy field of a vacuum, which produces a scalar wave, a hyperspatial structure consisting of vortex rings of electric flux. Moray B. King, speaking at the 1986 Tesla Symposium in Colorado Springs, claimed that both Nikola Tesla and T. Henry Moray produced inventions that use this energy. In essence this is the free energy of utopian space.

1. Umberto Eco, "Towards a New Middle Ages," in *On Signs*, edited by Marshall Blonsky (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), pp. 503–4.



THE AETHEIAPOLIS

1987

Oil, acrylic, ink, and lettering on canvas

73½ × 73½ in.

186.5 × 186.5 cm

Subject: The Organization of Individual Minds into a System for a Specific Purpose

Symbol Evocation: The Form of Utopia

Comments: The Aetheiapolis, or Singularity City, is a proposed conceptual city with one function: to realize the true nature of the form of utopia. The sixty-four inhabitants are made up of thirty-two people from the present, sixteen from the past, and sixteen from the future. It is of paramount importance to the concept of utopia to consult people from the past and future in order to avoid being temporally parasitic to the social intentions of those already dead and possibly temporally destructive toward the social intentions of those yet unborn.

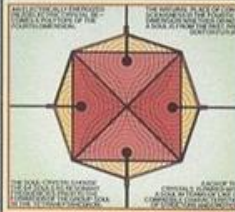
Most utopias are presented as constructs already in medias res with no indication of how they came to exist, or in what way they might dissolve or disrupt future societies. My city attempts to answer this problem. It is not, therefore, a utopia, but a device for confronting the entity of utopia.

The Aetheiapolis is built on a fifty-foot deep brine pond 1,000 feet in diameter which contains a hydromedusa, or jellyfish, genetically programed to reach a diameter of 650 feet. At this size the jellyfish cannot possibly move and its electrical and psychic circuitry can be used. Thirty-two astral projection chambers are mounted at the end of the tendrils. Between the tendrils are thirty-two time machines controlled from the astral projection chambers. Sixteen of the time machines are tuned to specific space-time coordinates in the past, and sixteen tuned to coordinates in the future.

Through various electronic and psychotronic devices such as the Project Hermes Device, the particular resonant frequencies of the sixty-four souls of the inhabitants are converged into a standing wave and directed to the tetraheptahedron. This piezoelectric crystal form is modeled on the firestone crystal that Edgar Cayce claimed was the main motive power source on Atlantis. Because the tetraheptahedron is spun simultaneously on three perpendicular axes by means of nested rings, it subsumes lower dimensions. The tetraheptahedron creates the passage from *dianoia* (reason) to *episteme* (pure thought), or from the fourth to the fifth dimensional realm, and back again.

THE AETHEIAPOLIS

THE AETHEIAPOLIS IS A STRUCTURED SINGULARITY MIND CITY THAT IS COMPOSED OF A GROUP SOUL MADE UP OF 64 SOULS, 32 FROM THE PRESENT, 16 FROM THE PAST, AND 16 FROM THE FUTURE.



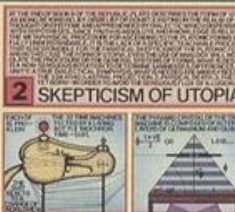
THE SOUL CRYSTALS AS RESIDENCES



THE SEARCH FOR UTOPIA



THE TETRAHEPTAHEDRON



2 SKEPTICISM OF UTOPIA



THE PRE-RESIDENTIAL TIME-MACHINES



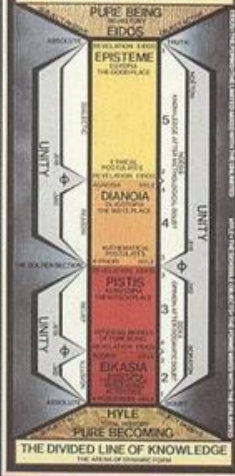
THE SYMBOL OF UTOPIA



THE ARCHITECTURAL-BODY OF THE AETHEIAPOLIS IS GENETICALLY MODIFIED IN PART: THE HYDROMEDUSA: THE HYDROZOAN IS 650 FT IN DIA, IN A BRINE POND 1000 FT IN DIA, AND 50 FT DEEP.



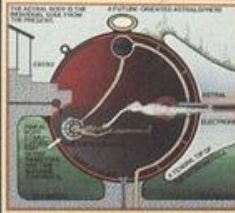
THE MONAD OF ABSOLUTE ALIVENESS



THE DIVIDED LINE OF KNOWLEDGE



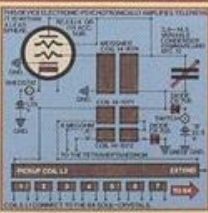
THE COSMIC OCTAVE OF FATE



1 THE ASTRAL SPHERE



3 MILIEU AS THE MIND



THE PROJECT HEIMES DEVICE



4 GROUP MYSTICISM



THE EDGTON ETHERIC WAVE DEVICE

THE INTUITIONS OF THE GOODNESS

BEYOND THE PAST BARRIER

BEYOND THE KITSCH BARRIER

THE CHOP LOGIC



THE PORTALS

Symbol AND MYTH

Language

Symbolism and mythology are essentially the same. Neither can be totally understood without a theory of language, nor can they be totally appreciated without recognizing a basic difference in their realities: their aspects of being static and dynamic, respectively.

One of the pioneers of semiotics, Jacques Lacan, states:

Instead of saying that Freud anticipates linguistics, I introduce the following formula: The unconscious is the condition of linguistics. . . . An analyst, on the contrary, who bathes in the procedures of the university and who is infatuated by it will be captured by its discourse and will make the blatantly erroneous statement that the unconscious is the condition of language. Those who say this make themselves into authors by disregarding what I told them, what I incanted to them, which is that language is the condition of the unconscious. . . . Freud proposed the following evidence to sustain the ordering he called the unconscious: 1) The subject is not one who knows what he is saying. 2) Something is said by the word the subject cannot remember. 3) The subject behaves oddly and believes that his behaviour is his own.¹

Expanding Lacan's incantation a bit we can say that language is the something essential to the appearance or the occurrence of the unconscious. He seems to be saying what Benjamin Lee Whorf said about the nature of language and its relationship to the universe. Whorf claimed that language possesses a relativity principle such that unless their linguistic backgrounds are similar or can in some way be correlated, no two observers are led by the same physical evidence to the same picture of the universe. A cosmology, therefore, is a creature of the language that describes it, and so nature is not something subject to a model of creativity that cannot be at least partly delineated (as sustained by the theory of *creatio ex nihilo*), but rather something that is said.

The mathematician René Thom has also developed this idea in his study of catastrophe theory, which has implications in biology, topology, and linguistics. He declared: "As far as life and social sciences are concerned, it is difficult for me to judge whether my present ideas may be of interest, but in writing these pages I have reached the conviction that there are simulating structures of all natural external forces at the very heart of the genetic endowment of our species, at the unassailable depth of the Heraclitean *logos* of our soul, and that these structures are ready to go into action whenever necessary."²

Logos is the Greek word for "word." The ancient Greeks used two related words to amplify *logos*: *eido*, meaning form, and *mythos*, meaning speech. The *logos* (or form-word) was the utterance of the fates, or the *moerae*. The statements Lacan uses to describe Freud's evidence for the existence of the unconscious could just as easily describe a hierophant's inspired seating at the oracle of Delphi or the current model of someone subject to the creative process without critical feedback.



Swedish rock engravings,
ca. 1300 B.C.

Top: ship and sunwheel
Middle: shaman, sunwheel
and footprint
Bottom: sword and ship

If Lacan's attempt to absolutize language into a universal creative principle is to be considered viable (as the cliché of the universe as information would have us believe), then there must be a way of uncovering in the nature of language an infinitely self-referential quality that is encoded in the process of the unfolding of the information being delivered. This self-referential element is necessarily inherent in a system that depends on it for its function, because if it were not inherent the entire system could conceivably cease to continue. But the self-referential quality itself cannot be totally predictable in its results.

In recursive (recursive meaning relating to a procedure that can repeat itself indefinitely or until a specified condition is met) function theory, a branch of mathematics known also as computability theory and as the theory of algorithms, there exists the so-called creativity theorem, which states that if there is a computable function f such that whenever $\omega_i \subset \bar{K}$, $f(i) \in \bar{K}$, but $f(i) \notin \omega_i$. Roughly translated, this means that if there exists a recursively enumerable but not recursive set K that embodies an object that is forever unknowable but of such a nature that we can continue to know it to be unknowable, then any recursively enumerable set having the property asserted of K is called a creative set.

The creativity theorem is a link to understanding the ancient concept of fate and the propulsion of fate's core of unknowableness into manifestation while that core continues to be protected from being known. Fate, therefore, equals language, and the description of fate's protection finds its equivalent in the various systems that have been outlined above.

I believe that inspiration embodies the idea of being possessed by an entity that is



Kubrick, 2001: A Space Odyssey

unknowable but whose unknowability passes through oneself in a manner that produces action as a by-product of the passage. Such an interpretation of inspiration has never been part of, on the one hand, the easy agnosticism of the aristocratic notion of creativity, which does not question the origin and hierarchy of ability, or, on the other hand, the constant democratic attack on the source of ability in an effort to produce an equitable distribution of it. Rather, the traditional association of creativity and language has been an attempt to understand how what we call religious symbolism and mythology work and why they have the power that they do.

The history of this attempt to uncover the nature of symbolism and mythology, primarily as aspects of religious rites and mystical experience, is as old as humankind. Here the archaic is sought for its own sake. Yet Rudolf Arnheim neglected to take this into account in an observation he made in the mid-1960s:

Today in both psychology and the arts there is a danger of confusing the elementary with the profound. Cultures in their late, refined stages seem to develop a weakness for primitivism, and one of the forms this inclination takes in our own case is the temptation to believe that the areas of the mind farthest away from consciousness harbor the deepest wisdom. This belief strikes me as a romantic superstition. The elementary or, to use a fashionable term, the archetypal statement has the simple strength of a primitive icon, but in its raw state it is acceptable to the developed mind only as an escape from the confusion of complexity or as a spice for the tired palate. It is a mediation rather than a revelation because, in order to meet the requirements of our intricate civilization, the fundamental images of human experience must be modulated by the conditions, tradi-

*tions, memories, and thoughts that make us what we are.*³

It would be intellectually obtuse, however, to apply Arnheim's remarks to work of the last of the pre-Socratics like Pythagoras or to Plato, who lived at the end of the Periclean age. *Weltschmerz*, or ennui, could not be properly attributed to Zosimos of Papopolis, the third-century alchemist who brought Gnosticism to a close. Would one say of Goethe, who suddenly became the first "modern man" after the Renaissance cycle faded with the Rococo, that he became immediately afflicted with Post-Modern malaise?

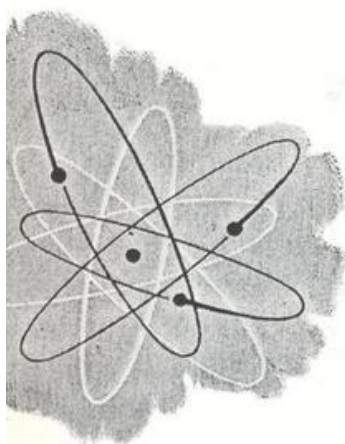
In the twentieth century alone there have been many people both well known and not so well known who have dedicated their working lives to the examination of aspects of the archaic for clues to keeping the processes of symbolism and mythology alive in the present. To name a few, I would mention the philosopher R. A. Schwaller de Lubiez, who discovered the content of the symbols of ancient Egypt; the existentialist philosopher Karl Jaspers, who developed a semiotics of mysticism; Mircea Eliade, who by his studies in comparative religion revealed patterns of symbols and myths that we constantly re-enact; George J. Gurdjieff, a modern alchemist and neo-Pythagorean, who revived the initiation into the esoteric; R. Buckminster Fuller, the engineer whose vision of a dynamic geometry has become a universal dimensional language; and John Micheil, who has rediscovered the ancient science of the cosmic canon of proportions and symbolic numbers. And there are many, many more, all contributing to this effort whether or not it was their stated intention to do so.

Symbols and Myths

As I see them, symbols and myths constitute the active aspects of fate. If fate equals



Aztec dancer



language, then fate at its most complex and sophisticated is the ever growing, ever changing, multitudinous language that exists throughout the universe in every conceivable and inconceivable form. But fate as language, in its most primordial form, is a dimensional system. The simplest dimensional system consists of the exfoliation into stages of the absolute aliveness of the one into the many of absolute death, the *kenosis* of being; conversely, through the meta-death of the many emanates the infoliation back into stages of consciousness toward the one, the *gnosis* of becoming. Symbols and Myths are the portals between the extreme stages, or dimensions, of *kenosis* and *gnosis*.

The full octave of portals is composed of natural singularities that act like message units. The portals that we as human beings can experience have often been altered to fit our understanding, in which case they are called altered portals or structured singularities. While Symbols and Myths are the general terms for the two entire octaves of dimensional portals, they specifically describe only the interface between the fourth and fifth dimensional realms.

The litany of portals, therefore, would be as follows:

The Octave of Temporality	The Octave of Spatiality
between 0 and 1 - List	between 0 and 1 - Sign
between 1 and 2 - Anecdote	between 1 and 2 - Index
between 2 and 3 - Tale	between 2 and 3 - Icon
between 3 and 4 - Legend	between 3 and 4 - Archetype
between 4 and 5 - Myth	between 4 and 5 - Symbol
between 5 and 6 - Epiphany	between 5 and 6 - Cypher
between 6 and 7 - Kratophany	between 6 and 7 - Cipher
between 7 and 8 - Hierophany	between 7 and 8 - Sypher

Thus the dimensional interactive litany rising from absolute death would be List-Sign, Anecdote-Index, Tale-Icon, Legend-Archetype, Myth-Symbol, Epiphany-Cypher,

Kratophany-Cipher, finally reaching absolute life in Hierophany-Sypher.

Each realm of the dimensional portals represents an aspect of the consciousness that dwells within each dimension. List-Sign, for instance, represents the atom of consciousness of the ego, just as Myth-Symbol represents the integrated self, and Hierophany-Sypher the so-called higher self or universal soul.

Because consciousness passes through every aspect of the universe from the objective-mechanical to the subjective-living, in both the physical and the metaphysical realms, what we as humans call experience is the consciousness of consciousness, bound by the two limits of perception and revelation. And as such, experience is naturally an anthropocentric vision of the universe, a universe that becomes divided into three parts: the macrocosm, or that part of the metaphysical aspect of the universe that is inaccessible to human experience, which contains forms of consciousness that completely transcend human consciousness; the mesocosm, or that part of both the physical and the metaphysical aspects of the universe within the limits of human consciousness, including the so-called transcendent aspects of human consciousness; and the microcosm, or that part of the physical aspect of the universe that has become inaccessible to human experience because as humans we have evolved beyond this aspect, not in the Darwinian sense of evolution but in an epistemological and primordial sense.

The Mesocosm

The mesocosm, then, is the total realm of human experience and involves the symbology and mythology of three physical dimensions and one metaphysical dimension. It is by neither the objective quality of perception nor the subjective quality of

LINEARITY: THE FIRST DIMENSION OF SPATIALITY

LINKS CAN NOT BE
PERCEIVED BUT LINEARITY ITSELF
CAN BE CONCEIVED AS PROFILES
OF SHADOWS REGARDLESS OF
THE TWO OR THREE DIMENSIONAL
DIRECTION OF THE PROFILES.

revelation but by the projective quality of the human imagination that we inhabitants of the mesocosm know of the existence of the macrocosm and the microcosm of the universe. For instance, what we call a line by imaginative projection is in reality an abstraction from the profile of a shadow, the final limit of human perception. This projection of the imagination makes us realize the existence of the microcosm. In like manner the mystical experience—the limit of human revelation—is projected by the imagination to have its source in the divine world, or the macrocosm. Within the mesocosm the semiotic rise of consciousness to revelation involves an actual inversal of the nature of the basic epistemic entity. In the presence of revelation, that which knows and that which is known exist in a mutually interdependent relationship. The epistemic progression that begins in the microcosm as Sign-List is first manifest in the mesocosm as Index-Anecdote, then moves to Icon-Tale, next to Archetype-Legend, and finally to Symbol-Myth. Knowledge advances from the absolute arbitrariness of information to its absolute nonarbitrariness. We recognize the change in knowledge forms first by convention, then by logical evidence, next by homeomorphism and isomorphism of structure, and finally by revelation. This epistemic change is also indicated by the manner in which the relationship between the knower, the individual, who is at first active, and that which is known, at first passive, is inversed in revelation, with that which is known becoming active and the individual-knower becoming passive.

The inversion of the epistemic model may not be noticed until an individual confronts—knows—an authentic Symbol-Myth as a subjective experience. From the point of view of objective experience such Symbol-

Myth dimensional portal examples as black/white holes and worm holes, the velocity of light at the center of a photon, the still center of a moving wheel, or the states of rest of the two ends of the invariant plane of oscillation of a pendulum system may still seem to be scientific curiosities until a first mystical experience makes the connection for an individual.

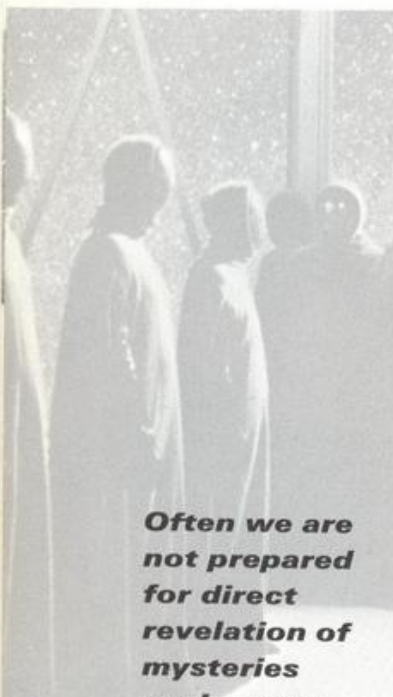
The Symbol-Myth as Subjective Experience
Symbol-Myths are energy portals between the fourth and fifth dimensional realms, Time-Solvold and Eternity-Vosolid, and in the epistemic ranking of human consciousness they are of the first order in the quest for meaning and context. Being in their presence is like facing something totally beyond yourself. They appear as beings of greater maturity, aliveness, and internal complexity than you. Their capacity to generate an energy of a different and more intense nature than you are capable of generating elicits the classic sublime response, which transcends beauty: joy combined with horror at the rush of the infinite. This response has led to their being interpreted as divine and anthropomorphized as gods and daemons.

But a Symbol-Myth is ultimately neither a subject nor an object. It is definable only as a portal, an entity characterized by its capacity to transform. And what is transformed is the nature of consciousness itself at each dimensional realm. The awareness of consciousness in transition is what we call the subjective aspect of Symbol-Myths. The transition from dimensional realm four to dimensional realm five as a conscious experience is the mystical experience, and as such is the most complex experience we as humans will ever know.

There is an analogous experience of a lower dimensional transition that although often neglected nevertheless contains the elements of unfolding and astonishment that accom-

Laffoley, Ms. Found in a
Klein Bottle Proposal, detail

Nelson, *The Black Hole*



Often we are not prepared for direct revelation of mysteries such as sex, death, good, or evil, and as a method of self-protection against their infinity we either trivialize them by inducing boredom or escape them through insanity.

pany dimensional transition's impact on consciousness. The experience is popularly called the uncanny. This is the experience of Archetype-Legend, which can be called the discovery of time. I do not mean observation of the effects of time, such as the watching of clocks or the aging process. I mean the sense of coming upon the elusive nature of time itself. Examples of this experience would be the sense that time goes by faster as you get older or that it momentarily slows down during potentially fatal situations such as being in an automobile accident or being shot from close range; the feeling of the loss of time as the result of drug-induced black-outs or from continuous oversleeping; the peculiar feeling you get when you first see a movie run in reverse; and what is called the "bootstrap syndrome," that odd sensation of hearing or seeing and not recognizing your voice or appearance reproduced on mechanical media or an image of yourself at another age.

Finally, there are those experiences that begin to happen when someone discovers that they are taking the first steps on the path to experiencing a Symbol-Myth. These are the so-called occult or psychic phenomena, and they fall into four general categories. First would be those synchronistic events, which Carl Jung described as meaningful coincidence of events, that are acausal and completely private to the individual who has them. Second are the well-recognized conditions of *déjà vu*, or the feeling that you have witnessed someone, thing, or event before you came upon it objectively, while having prior knowledge that you did not, and *jamais vu*, the feeling that you have always known and will always know someone through many lifetimes. Third are the more objective or "objectivizable" phenomena, including telekinesis, pre- and retrocognition, telepathy,

and clairvoyance; all these particular psychic phenomena have been the subjects of scientific scrutiny since the end of the nineteenth century. And fourth are those experiences like astral projection or soul travel and the near-death experience, which are higher derivatives of lucid or veridical dreaming, in which you know you are dreaming and in which other people who are having veridical dreams simultaneously can join you in the same dream. These fourth-category experiences almost eliminate the subject-object polarity of waking consciousness.

The Normative Structure of Symbol-Myths
Symbol-Myths reveal mystery; they do not act as devices that decode mysteries into something else. A conundrum, such as the revealed logical plot of a mystery novel, is something that can be solved, and when it is solved it ceases to exist. The true mysteries of existence—from the nature of a color or sound that is experienced directly all the way up to the mystery of pure being itself—cannot be eliminated by experiencing those dimensional portals of Symbol-Myths that have as their subjects of focus the mysteries in question. Instead we find ourselves at the portal of an infinite abyss of mystery. Often we are not prepared for direct revelation of mysteries such as sex, death, good, or evil, and as a method of self-protection against their infinity we either trivialize them by inducing boredom or escape them through insanity. But this is where an artistic tradition of creating structured singularities emerges. The creation of structured singularities is not a strategy aimed at diverting the full impact of mysteries, but rather a step in a process of initiation. Structured singularities build ritual to allow us to withstand mysteries until we can pass the critical barrier of infinity and live in their presence.

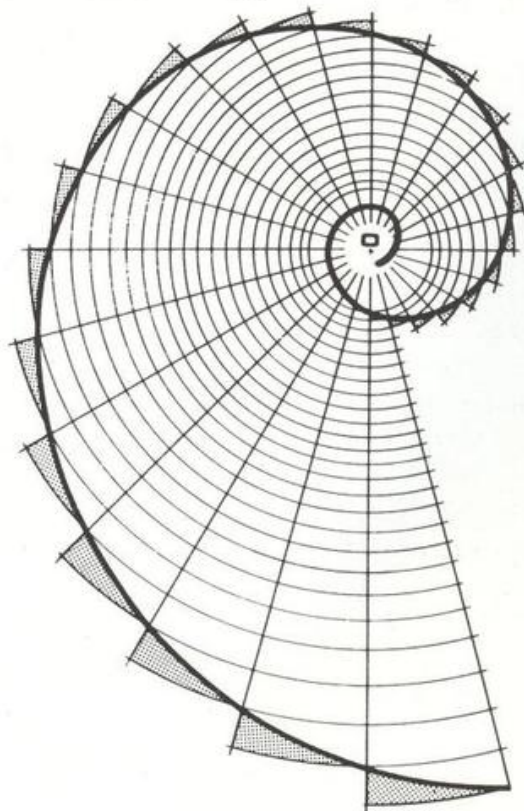
Logarithmic spiral based on
the golden proportion

In the final section of his treatise *Von der Wahrheit* (Concerning Truth), the philosopher Karl Jaspers wrote about the ideal activity of making Symbol-Myths as structured singularities: "This task of actually taking hold of being is fulfilled by the symbol. That is now our theme. The cypher is neither object nor subject. It is objectivity which is permeated by subjectivity and in such a way that being becomes present in the whole."⁴

Jaspers describes certain characteristics that these structured singularities must possess to be true cyphers. They must communicate a philosophical awareness of being and recognize that being is not another reality hidden behind empirical realities. A state of suspension and the avoidance of false corporealities insure the Symbol-Myth's sense of infinity. Jaspers also maintains that genuine Symbol-Myths cannot be interpreted or decoded, and if the attempt is made they will fall back into empirical reality—superstition, nonreality—allegory, detachment—the aesthetic attitude, conceptualization—dogmatic metaphysics or what is intentionally wanted—magic. Finally, Jaspers states that true cyphers are not some means to an end; they cannot be produced at will. They are found and unconsciously revived by each generation. The artist helps the cyphers unfold of their own nature.

The unfolding process as experienced by the artist is astonishment in the presence of a cypher, which leads to a questioning of the artist in relation to the cypher, or the structured singularity of Symbol-Myth. Such questioning centers around the nature of the mystery presented, and includes the realization that the cypher is speaking to the artist and that there is an ontological distance between the being-that-I-am (existence) and the being-that-is-all (transcendence) that the cypher presents.

Jaspers calls the final phase of the unfolding of a Symbol-Myth a cypher conjuration. A visual metaphor for this phase is an infinite series of glass panes placed flat on top of each other and extending back into space in the form of a gigantic line in a logarithmic spiral around a focus of light in an infinite number of revolutions. The line of transparent glass panes keeps moving toward the light but never quite reaches it. The power of light extends back to the initial pane of glass and prevents any one pane from being observed, an event that would halt the action of the conjuration. In other words, the portal of Symbol-Myth has the power to transform the opaqueness of phenomena into the transparency of cypher, yielding an infinite series of transparent panes that revolve indefinitely around the infinitely great and infinitely small



point of pure being without ever arriving. Yet in the approach to pure being, the actual distance between existence and transcendence is reduced.

Symbols and Myths as Structured Singularities

For purposes of analysis Symbols and Myths can be artificially separated to examine the differences in their natures as singularities. All singularities are ultimately the same; they simply present themselves in a different guise depending on whether their context is the Octave of Spatiality or the Octave of Temporality.

The portals that deal with spatiality exhibit singularities that are dimensional variations on motion and rest. They are indicated by the geometry of incommensurables like phi (the golden section), pi, or newer additions to the list like fractals. Each of these incommensurables hovers about a focus, or "attractor," providing an entity that processes energy of a different nature at each dimensional realm. The various energies give the differing character to each singularity and signal the next higher dimension. Like energy rippling from muscle to muscle during some great effort, the singularities of spatiality drain the energy of absolute life back and forth, up and down through the dimensions.

Temporality's portals exhibit singularities of a slightly different nature. They are not like the graphically definable geometric points of spatiality, but more like hiatuses in a process or lacunae in a line of text. These singularities are the instants of change between possibilities and manifestations. The most obvious are singularities of Time—the abyss of transition between a cause and its effect. What we call mythology in the storylike sense arises from this analysis of time. The time-

line of each of our lives, supposedly consisting of a back-to-back, nonreversible set of causal events, has but one possibility that is manifested for each instant. But if we imagine beyond the confines of Einstein's and Minkovskij's world-line, we know that we have many possibilities that we could manifest. Eternity, the next dimension above Time, becomes the eternal repository of each possibility that was manifested by us. Eternity, then, allows the critical path of each of our lives to exist in a state that actually transcends the religious definition of immortality. The continuing existence of other possibilities that we know were ours simply by the logic of situations within our timelines becomes the imperative to fantasy and to social connections within time. As all persons begin to access one another's possibilities and to perform the rituals of mutual actualization of those possibilities friendship, love, nations, countries, and worlds develop. The crescendo results in the hyparxis of the universe—the complete unfolding and manifestation of all possibilities.

1. Jacques Lacan, "Sign, Symbol, Imaginary," in *On Signs*, edited by Marshall Blonsky (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), pp. 205–6.
2. René Thom, *Structural Stability and Morphogenesis* (Redding, Mass.: W. A. Benjamin, 1975), pp. 324–25.
3. Rudolf Arnheim, *Toward a Psychology of Art* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1972), p. 289.
4. Karl Jaspers, *The Search for Being* (New York: Noonday Press, 1962), p. 464.



T H A N A T O N I I I

1989

Oil, acrylic, ink, and lettering on canvas

73½ × 73½ in.

186.5 × 186.5 cm

(Illustrated in progress)

Subject: A Visitation by a Flying Saucer and Alien

Symbol Evocation: The Tortoise as the Earth-Mother, the Support of the World

Comments: The painting depicts an extraterrestrial's exhortation to me, explaining how to:

- 1) Link life to death in a continuous experience.
 - 2) Utilize the resulting thanatonic energy to travel faster than the speed of light, turn matter into consciousness and back again, alter evolution at will, and exist simultaneously at every moment of time.
 - 3) Move the entire universe into the fifth dimensional realm, and say when in history it is possible for this to happen.
- I have also received other information I cannot understand.

Since this information was given to me directly but not for me per se, it must be communicated to others, many of whom are better prepared than I to receive it. Accordingly, I was also shown how to make the painting into a psychotronic, or mind-matter interactive, device which is activated by approaching the painting, stretching out your arms, touching the upright hands, and staring into the eye. By doing this *new* information will come to you through the active use of the divine proportion, which is the proportion of life connecting to death.

THE THIRD ARRIVAL OF QUAZGAA KLAATU THE THANATON III IN HIS FLYING SAUCER: THE SYNTHEKE



THE
BAUharoque
 AS
 THE END *of*
 HISTORY

The Bauharoque as the End of History
 Taking the aesthetic attitude toward space leads to the end of space, that is, the birth of utopia. Taking the aesthetic attitude toward time leads to the end of time, that is, the death of history. Hegel took us to this point, where we remain today. By 1837, with the posthumous publication of *The Philosophy of History* by Georg W. F. Hegel, the eighteenth-century vision of divine reason realizing itself in time was complete. Hegel's view of history stressed process over product, or facts. The process of history embodies hard-won progress that comes out of opposition creating tension that only death or time can resolve. With his famous pattern of the dialectic—thesis, antithesis, and synthesis—Hegel brought the study of history to world attention, arguing that the true importance of history is revealed only when it is viewed as the story of the dynamically related episodes of concrete universals.

But the history of modern history really began early in the eighteenth century with Vico's *Principles of a New Science* (1725), in which he challenges Aristotle's claim that history is merely a catalogue of the particulars of life and has no place in the company of metaphysics. Vico argued that history is a universal. "Everything is history," he declared, concluding that as man makes history, so it must be man's primary discipline.

At the end of the century the poet Goethe developed the concepts of the *Zeitgeist*, the general intellectual, moral, and cultural climate of an era; the *Weltanschauung*, a world view that explains history and the purpose of the world; the *Weltansicht*, a view of reality as a whole; and the *Weltschmerz*, or sorrow over the present or future woes of the world.

The zeitgeist as an analytic instrument for understanding periods of great innovative change had its origin not in the Neo-Classicism of the eighteenth century but in that very instant in time between the demise of Neo-Classicism and the rise of Romanticism in late eighteenth-century Germany. As such the idea of the zeitgeist effectively unites the classical and romantic impulses and provides a temporal hinge between two of the most innovative periods in western history, the Renaissance and the Modern. Goethe discovers the zeitgeist just at the point of change from one great cycle of history to another. In the Renaissance cycle man dominates space; in the Modern cycle man becomes space. These cycles can be mapped by applying the zeitgeist, or time-spirit, to the dynamics of a cultural history based on a quest for innovation within the Hegelian tension-resolution structure.

The Renaissance Cycle

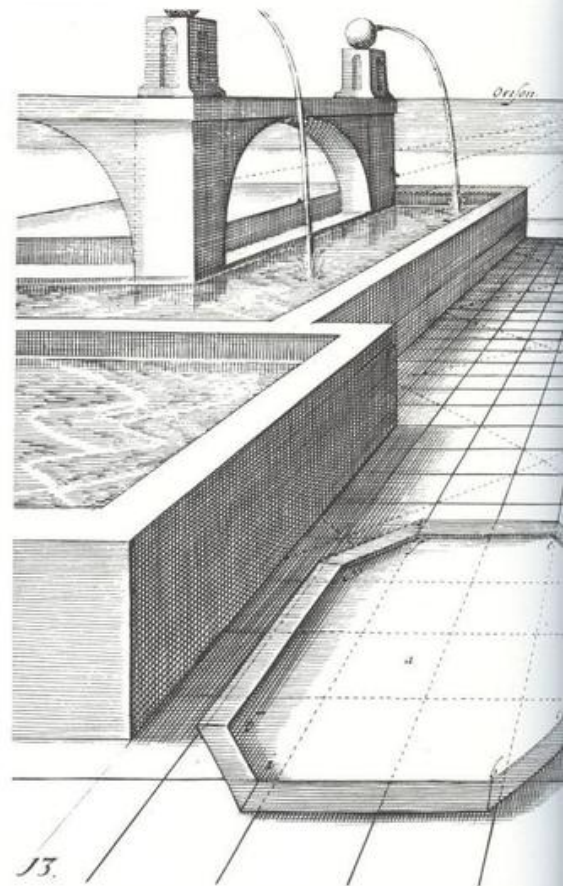
The High Renaissance was characterized by classical sensibility, the use of classical forms, and a sense of separation in space. Artists looked to the ancient Greek and Roman worlds for inspiration on both the intellectual and physical levels. Plato and archaeology flourished side by side. The mysterious spaces of the Gothic and Byzantine periods represented the unacceptable past. Rational one-point perspective divided space into closed entities. The implied location of the vanishing point governing the organization of depicted space conceptually expressed the existence of another space that was theoretically inaccessible. This inaccessible space was the space of the platonic forms, forever disconnected from the world that man dominated and felt an imperative to urbanize.

Next came the Mannerist period, characterized by romantic sensibility, the use of classical forms, and a sense of contact in space. There arose a neurotic dissatisfaction with clear classical solutions that emphasized form to the detriment of content. Mannerism deployed bizarre stylistic effects to break down, explode, or otherwise distort the forms of the High Renaissance. The Mannerists posed figures as if they lived in parallel universes, estranged and unable to communicate. In their pictures multiple perspective points recede in illogical directions around people with the look of bored elitists possessing the emotional coldness of the epicene.

In the Baroque era that followed the sensibility was classical, the forms were romantic, and there was a sense of continuity in space. True romantic forms appeared as artists of the Baroque looked back to the Gothic for the seeds of a super-energy that would permeate both the real and the illusory, *sotto in sù*, and create a space that

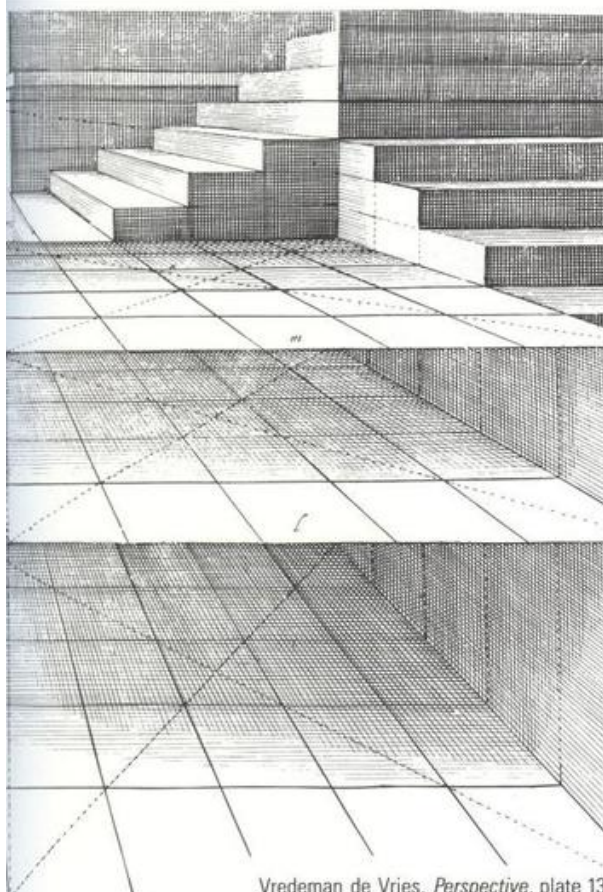


Bernini, *St. Theresa in Ecstasy*



sought perfect continuity. Sometimes as many as seventeen points of perspective were harmonized to create an urban world dedicated to pure theater and the celebration of life. Space became accessible, filled with palpable energy, and more openly feminine. All aspects of existence were synthesized using the forms, processes, and patterns in nature as models: the logarithmic spirals of shells, the undulating curves of flowing water, or the structure of vegetation. The High Renaissance was now considered overly pristine; it had become for the Baroque the unacceptable past.

Last in Renaissance cycle was the Rococo

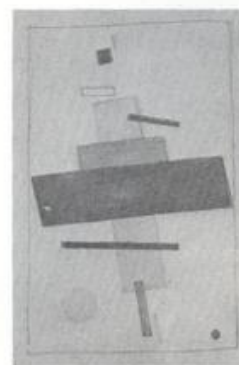
Vredeman de Vries, *Perspective*, plate 13

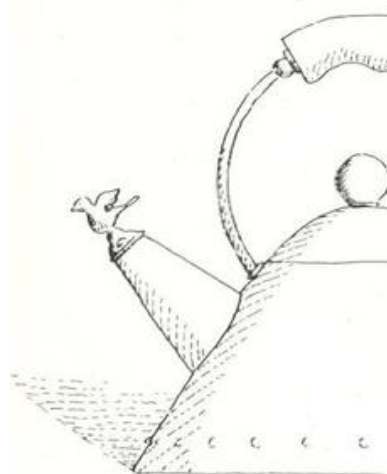
period, characterized by romantic sensibility, the use of romantic forms, and a sense of separation in space. Although it appeared to continue the Baroque in a lighter, more playful manner, the art of the Rococo (from *rocaille*, or ornamental rock and shell work) was actually an attempt to shut out the pain and discomfort brought on by the excesses of the Baroque. The result was a shallow prettiness and gaiety in feminine spaces. The interior design of townhouses, furniture, picture frames, and ornamentation on buildings all became targets as Baroque forms and space were distorted into total discontinuity. The Rococo ended the Renaissance cycle and would become the origin of modern suburban style.

The Modern Cycle

The discovery of the zeitgeist marks the initiation of the Modern cycle, which itself begins with Realism. Realism is characterized by classical sensibility, the use of classical forms, and a sense of separation in space. With the impact of photography and the growing rejection of the idealistic tendencies of Romanticism, Realism sought to depict the space people actually occupy. This was the no-nonsense space of reductive science concerned with one thing at a time. True Realism should not be confused with its two degenerate variations: Social Realism, which is the political use of realism, and mindless Naturalism. The Realists chose to portray ordinary events in the hope of creating an immediate entry into a space free of Renaissance predilections. This is the space that nineteenth-century American utopian communities thought they could occupy.

Next in the Modern cycle is Modernism itself, characterized by romantic sensibility, the use of classical forms, and a sense of contact in space. Although it is commonly thought to be limited to the High Modernism of the twentieth century and to have its origins in western Europe, Modernism in fact began around 1850 and had several different sources, not the least of which were the utopian communities in America. Other influences were writers like Edgar Allan Poe, Madame Blavatsky, and the mathematician Georg Cantor, all of whom revolted against the moralistic, limiting tendencies of Realism. For over one hundred years Modernism, motivated by a practical mysticism, elevated the artist to the level of high priest and art to the sole means by which the whole world could be transformed. Its image of abstraction was the symbol it held up to the world of its present and by which it judged the entire past unacceptable.

Malevich, *Suprematist Composition*



Graves, *Teakettle for Alessi*

On the heels of Modernism came Post-Modernism, with its classical sensibility, use of romantic forms, and sense of continuity of space. Reacting against the messianic rhetoric and functional ideologies of Modernism, Post-Modernism sought to recover the quieter space of Realism, while borrowing imagery from the classical, commercial, and vernacular worlds. Its main spatial intent was to show—and it did this with great wit and irony—that as we become more at one with space it can manipulate us as much as we manipulate it. Semiotics became its science, to describe how Post-Modern space failed to live up to its utopian expectations. Post-Modernism was self-conscious as no other period had been. Most historical periods are named after the fact, but Post-Modernism knew when it started (1970) and it named itself. Just as it was Mannerism's counterpart in the Modern cycle, Post-Modernism was also its complete inverse. Where Mannerism was truly perverse, Post-Modernism was the genteel fop. The kitsch of Mannerism became the chic of Post-Modernism. Mannerism, a sensibility of pure style, sought to disconnect life from art and in this it appealed to the elite. Post-Modernism, a sensibility of total content, tried to unite art with life in the hope of appealing to the masses.

Post-Modernism achieved its greatest notoriety in the realm of architecture and, consistent with its base of irony, it was here that it was the least effective. Early buffs of Post-Modernist architecture with no solutions of their own gleefully watched the demise of Modernist mass housing projects (including their literal dynamiting) and talked nostalgically of the value of vernacular buildings. They smiled sardonically when architects, like Philip Johnson, who had lived through Modernism altered their original principles

in a desperate attempt to keep up with the times. This phenomenon took on a more amusing aspect at the end of the 1980s when King Charles III of England (then the Prince of Wales), in a fit of pique no doubt, actually tried to imitate populist bureaucrats by advocating Post-Modernist solutions that he thought would appeal to commoners.

The last period in the Modern cycle was the Bauharoque. The sensibility was romantic, the forms were romantic, and there was a sense of separation in space. From our perspective in the New Age, it was the most romantic of all the periods of Western history, even more so than the period called Romanticism that began in 1790. The Bauharoque began at the turn of the second millennium A.D. and provided the world with a hundred years of the most exciting challenges and solutions the human race has ever known. And this was all just before the second Dark Ages set in, a Dark Ages that affected not just the earth but the whole universe.

Due to certain bizarre conditions that arose during the Bauharoque, its entire history may never be known. Not that any historical period can ever be totally known, but even historians who have spent a lifetime studying this period admit they have run into impenetrable brick walls. Nevertheless, one thing is for certain: the Bauharoque ended for all time the genre known as science fiction that had been popular during the Modernist period. This was the genre of highly imaginative projections of both a practical and a theoretical nature. Science fiction may have been the part of Modernism's legacy that the people of the Bauharoque era took as their cultural motif of choice. I say this because as the research that was begun in the twentieth century on artificial intelligence continued into the twenty-first, scientists concentrated on the enhancement of the creative imagina-



Spielberg, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*

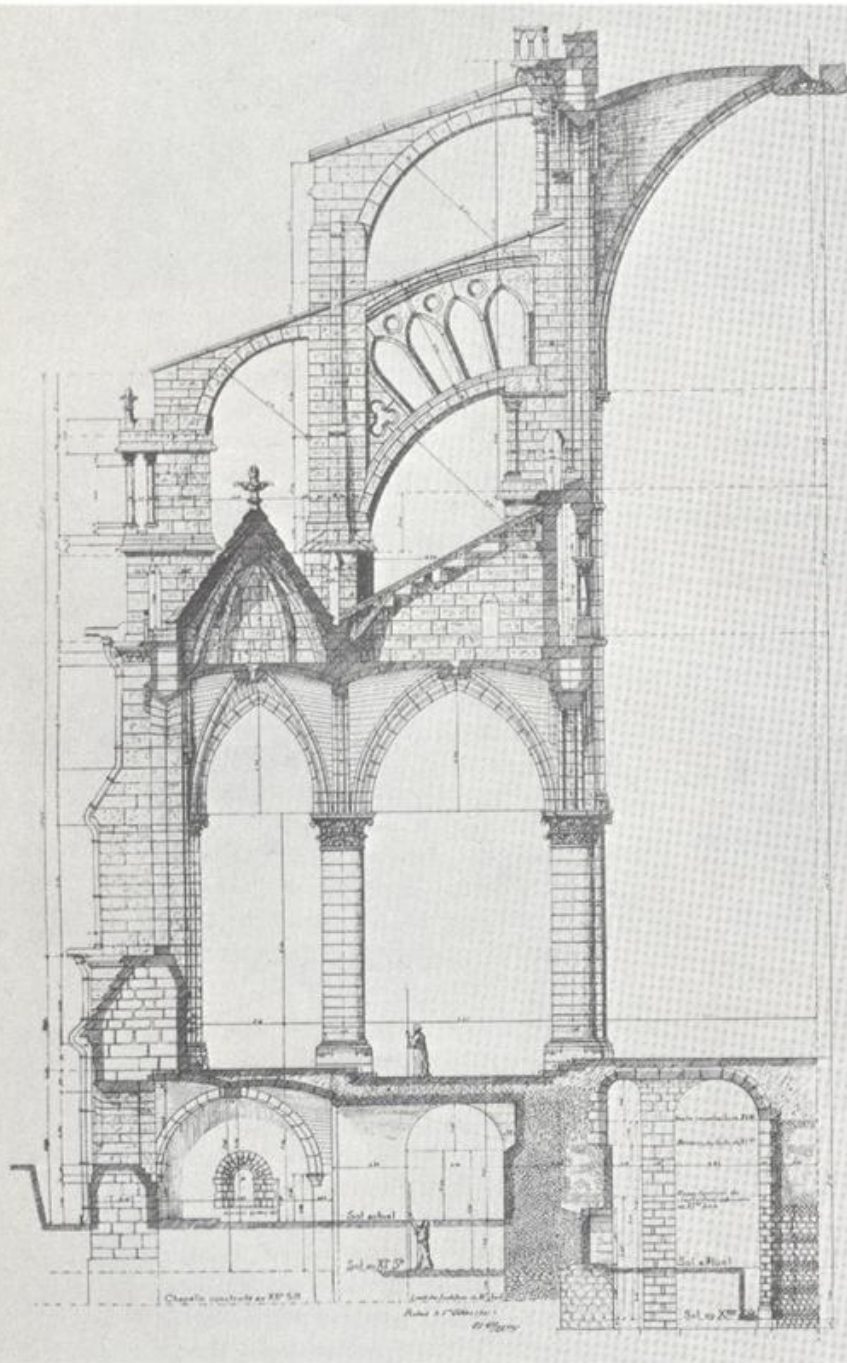
tion to a degree that has since been barred forever. It is therefore impossible for me to describe the true nature and events of this period even in many volumes, let alone this brief sketch. All I can do is drop a few hints about what I can comprehend.

The Bauharoque derived the first part of its name from the famous Bauhaus school of High Modernism that was founded in Weimar Germany in 1919. The Bauhaus strove to unify the arts under architecture with the aim of creating utopia. The ending of the name comes from the Baroque period, which had the same aim of unity of the arts but whose goal was to transform life into theater. The name, then, means utopian theater or theater of utopia, which is what this period literally became.

The Bauharoque began, not surprisingly, with a complete and literal rejection of the impotent cynicism of Post-Modernism. It directed its initial volley straight at the very heart of what Post-Modernists considered their forte: fashions and fads, a concern for the nature of time, and a taste for historicism. This happened in 1995 at the celebration of the hundredth anniversary of H.G. Wells's *The Time Machine*, where someone demonstrated the first successful time machine as an object-device. Amid the cheers of the gathered crowd this Bauharoquean hero transported the entire world directly to the year 2000, thereby avoiding the fin-de-millennium mood that had been affecting everyone

at that time, which oscillated between euphoria and despair. Instead, a century of high energy and total optimism was immediately launched. First, naturally, there was unrestricted time travel, which became more of a boon to engineers and tourists than to scholars or historians. We know, of course, that this did not last. The expected multi-millennium effects of time travel were eventually blocked in the Modieval period by karma scientists who discovered how to moralize certain time-dilation properties out of existence, and in so doing saved themselves and the rest of time from oblivion, although the manipulation caused the Neo-Gothick period to begin one hundred years earlier as a kind of retroactive punishment. As I said, I can give only some hints about the actual nature and events of the Bauharoque period, and that only up to the level of my personal imagination enhancement, which has been certified safe for human survival.

Although it revived the functionalism of Modernism, the Bauharoque really postulated a *poetry* of functionalism; its quest was therefore romantic and drew from the spiritual force of the Gothic in the same way the Baroque period of the seventeenth century had. The Gothic was the time of the master builders of cathedrals who were capable of great feats of engineering. For the Gothic engineer, as for the Bauharoquean, the practical had a spiritual meaning. The Spirit of



Chartres cathedral, transverse section of choir

God was immanent in nature, not an entity outside it. But in its attempt to express spiritual or utopian space the Gothic could not totally become one with space, as the Bauharoque was later able to. All parts of the universe only theoretically accessible to the Gothic were actually accessible to the Bauharoque. Because of the initial profusion of seemingly unlimited resources, the problems that faced this brief but brilliant civilization arose in the second half of its unfolding. I say the second half because the Bauharoque naturally divided itself into two halves. The Gothic accepted two ways of living: the *vita activa* and the *vita contemplativa*, the active and the passive, or contemplative, models of life. The two existed simultaneously, side by side. But the Bauharoque, with its imperative for formal separation, neatly divided its time into two halves. The first was the active phase of building, and the second was the passive phase of being one with space.

The first period, called the Time of the Light, saw the flourishing of mega- and microengineering. That so much was accomplished in fifty years would have been impossible without the time machine to focus all the time in the universe to that present. The accomplishments of this phase were many. All parts of the universe were explored, all creatures were met and political relations with them established. Locally, early on in the Bauharoque the earth and the moon were physically linked by a bridge that was connected to geodetic spheres around each body. This produced a giant motor that helped form the earth into what it is now—a living being in homage to Plato. It was literally a living homage. All human environments and instrumentality were built of living tissue, both vegetable and animal. Time-controlled explosions were discovered to be

effective as structural devices and along with gravity control they became ways to recycle and reclaim wastes. Living machinery scaled to the molecular and atomic realms made it possible both to reconstruct people afflicted with injuries and aging tissues and to build entirely new planets. The natural elements were altered. Structural water, or solid water obtained not by freezing but by electronically enhancing its surface tension, was developed and became a material used to make water clothing, water buildings, and enormous but inexpensive greenhouse spheres in space. Through advancements in ideas such as the cosmic ray motor and the orgone motor, first explored by Modernists like Nikola Tesla and Wilhelm Reich, localized free-energy sources were harnessed to light any planet, even its night sky if its inhabitants so wished.

Mind physics, psychotronics, mathematical research into the nature of dimensionality, and the farming of black holes (macronatural singularities) and wormholes (micronatural singularities) reached their full potential, and faster-than-light engineering became a reality. Discrete mental entities—wills, loves, hates, or dreams used for energy storage—were created. It was discovered in passing that certain psychic phenomena like astral projection were excellent environments for most bureaucratic and business functions, leaving time free for more rewarding activities.

The second period or phase of the Bauha-roque moved toward oneness with space itself. It came to be called the Time of the Darkness. Spiritual pursuits began innocently enough in the artist-priest tradition of Modernism. The motivation at work could be called the shaman imperative, and the period began with the more literal and predictable works. Ley lines on planets were reactivated and extended across galaxies. Religious texts were illustrated in space. Many planets commis-

sioned enormous holographic renderings of Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel for permanent installation in their skies. In the earth's solar system at an orbit of the asteroid belt Ceres, the entire medieval cosmos was built inside a sphere 64,000 miles in diameter, both to illustrate Dante's *Divine Comedy* and to allow people to participate in it.

Stars that had no dependent life forms were repositioned in space and then artificially powered to create animated geometric models. Fractal studies similar to those investigated by Buckminster Fuller and Benoit Mandelbrot in the twentieth century were conducted using these models. These large-scale experiments visually demonstrated the ultimate unity of all languages and showed that all living metaphors of information are recursive, self-referential, and self-propagating systems which unfurl from one dimension to another. Spiritual transcendence, or revelation, was proved to be an analogue of geometric dimensional unfolding. The space crystals, as they were called, became the cornerstones of the beautiful space cathedrals, millions of light-years in extent, that were built toward the end of the Medieval period and are now part of our universal museum system.

Some people created smaller and less elaborate sky presentations that were yet another of the many occult revivals that have occurred in Western history. (We of the earth soon discovered that this condition has always been present throughout the universe.) Simple geometric religious symbols, thought forms, horoscopes of the birth of planets, or demons that might have come right out of the Tibetan *Bardo Thodol* began to appear in many night skies by means of inexpensive holography. They were accompanied by giant musical instruments and color-healing devices that sent healing rays and vibrations to

As decreed by the Nocturnal Council of Guardians, no time machine that ever existed, exists now, or will be invented or improved upon can or will be able to penetrate this particular time zone. And in the past 25,000 years none ever has.

the planets below. These devices were held aloft easily enough. Each was connected by a sky hook of recycled crystalline graphite to a convenient garbage sphere that had been placed in geostationary orbit. Some of the holograms and healing devices were judged to be in bad taste by the Bauharoqueans, who considered them space graffiti or space junk. The tastemakers regularly and unceremoniously removed them without a second thought. This was about when the trouble started and the Time of Darkness came upon us.

Here the history of Bauharoque is perforated by a strange blackout of at least its last forty-eight years, between A.D. 2052 and 2100, when the Neo-Gotick period began. Those years are forever impregnable, having been rendered internally immune to time monitoring. As decreed by the Nocturnal Council of Guardians, no time machine that ever existed, exists now, or will be invented or improved upon can or will be able to penetrate this particular time zone. And in the past 25,000 years none ever has. The events that transpired then are considered ultimately fatal to the entire known universe. We have only scraps of information, hints, rumors, or just legends. All I can do at this point is tell you pieces of a story that my ninety-year-old grandfather told me when I was about ten. Apparently the story was told to him by my great grandfather, who in turn had heard it from one of his famous relatives, Nolos the Great, the most renowned of our time adjusters.

Nolos was on a routine trip to the Negyptian period to meet a time priest who was to give him his next assignment. During their conversation Nolos off-handedly brought up the fact that every time he time scanned the years between 2100 and 2052 he would draw a blank. He said he thought his time scanner

was flawed, unless those years were on temporary time lock. As he was never assigned to do any adjusting of that period anyway he would invariably forget about the situation until the next time it happened. "You people from the future," said the time priest, "have no sense of the mechanical. That time period has been placed on permanent time lock—the only one in history." The time priest was reluctant to say more, given the official sanctions, but Nolos swore to be discreet and urged him to talk. Nolos learned that one of the priest's ancestors from the Modieval period had once interviewed a survivor of the Time of the Darkness before the survivor was time processed to another part of history, which would have automatically erased certain of his memories forever.

The survivor told of how research in all fields accelerated exponentially during the Bauharoque. Artificial enhancement of the human imagination was of foremost concern, and volunteers were needed to test safety factors for all new equipment. On one occasion a member of a fringe occult group showed up to be a test subject for the latest model of the Phantasmatron, which operated by the conscious acceleration of scalar waves in an ion-acoustic resonant environment. Because all technology was now powered by cosmic rays (found in 2046 to be a natural example of Grand Unification Energy), the hyperspatial tensor of the Phantasmatron VII had to be compatible with the consciousnesses of both the subject and the operator of the device. When the subject walked into the lab on the first day of testing, the operator made an inadvertent time-slur about the man's ancestry. This caused an imperceptible deviation in calibration that later proved to have profound consequences. As the test began all seemed well until the power was pumped beyond the known safety limits. The



subject immediately collapsed. The operator thought he was dead, but as he bent over his body he saw movement. Helping the subject to his feet, he saw that the other's eyes were lit like live coals. Suddenly the subject began hurriedly making notes for something he claimed could cause any entity that existed to have never existed. He then began to sketch plans for other devices whose functions he could not even begin to describe to the operator. Moments later the subject ran out and was never seen or heard from again.

Not long afterward a strange religion came into existence. It was a mixture of first-century Gnostic ideas, certain kinds of mathematics, the evolutionary convergent-end state of human evolution predicted by the twentieth-century Jesuit priest Teilhard de Chardin, and new information obtained about the so-called near-death experience. These concepts were combined with a fanatical commitment to the sense of abstraction that had once dominated High Modernist art. The leader, who held total hypnotic control over his followers, actually divided them into sects and denominations right from the start. He said ironically that it would save time. There were, therefore, the illuminate Mondrians, the charismatic Pollocks, the devout Rouaults, and so on. The official name of this religion was the Church of the Universal Judgment, Order of Melchizedek. Unofficially they came to be called the Spacers because they believed that through their ritual they would become one with space itself.

Eventually the Spacers built an enormous space disk as their headquarters. The disk rested on the back of a giant turtle, which in turn was supported by another turtle, supported by a turtle, becoming an infinite tower of tortoises ending in a black hole. Identical turtles were manufactured under the disk at

a rate equal to that at which they were sucked into the hole. The disk was approximately .618 . . . light year in diameter and 7,927 miles high. A living replica of an earth snake in the act of eating its tail seemed to hold the disk together, similar to the linked tension ring that the old-earth artist Michelangelo had used around the dome of St. Peter's. At a distance of .236 . . . light year in from the edge of the disk rose a ring of ice-crystal mountains that soared to such heights they hid all that lay beyond.

Inside the ring of ice mountains was the main inhabited area. There, under a dome of self-lighting crystalline tourmaline .191 . . . light year in breadth was a sea larger than any ocean that had ever existed. Radiating out from the center of the domed hemisphere were twelve walls of gemstone—jasper, sapphire, agate, emerald, sardonyx, sardius, chrysolite, beryl, topaz, chrysoprase, jacinth, and amethyst—that rose a thousand feet out of the sea, dividing the waters except where openings in the walls let vessels pass back and forth. The walls were 500 feet wide and topped with roads. Aeolian harps end-to-end hovered in the air above, parallel to each length of road. Each wall was named for a different sign of the zodiac and the harps above were tuned to that sign's note: Aries was C; Taurus, E; Gemini, A-flat; Cancer, D-flat; Leo, F; Virgo, A; Libra, D; Scorpio, F-sharp; Sagittarius, B-flat; Capricorn, E-flat; Aquarius, G; and Pisces, B. Artificial winds played the harps, following the sequence of the circle of fifths, creating an audial logarithmic spiral. The Spacers lived on physically alive vessels of wondrous variety that moved back and forth over the surface of the water to form and reform cities. Viewed from above, this urban-aquatic activity acted out the cosmic horoscopes of every Spacer and allowed everyone to experience every other's



At the very summit a cloud twisted in toruslike motion, reflecting all seven colors of the rainbow as it rotated upon its own singularity.

existence through a mechanism that the survivor could not explain.

The walls met at the center of the disk at an uninhabited core 12,700 miles in diameter made of walled rings of land that rose in plateaus to the central island at the heart of the disk. Each ring of land was separated by a ring of water. The outermost wall of polished bronze, rising 2,000 feet above the water's surface, girded flat desert 5,000 miles wide. A ring of water 300 miles wide separated the desert from a wall 3,000 feet high and sheathed in shining silver that surrounded a ring of land 300 miles wide covered in bamboo. On the other side of a 200-mile-wide channel rose the next wall, of muted gold, which encircled a land ring 200 miles wide and covered with palms. The final ring of water was 100 miles wide and reached the last wall. This wall towered 5,000 feet above the water and gleamed like fire. It was covered in orichalc, more precious than gold, brought back from time voyages to ancient Atlantis. This last wall surrounded a lush island 400 miles in diameter. It seemed to be covered with many varieties of vegetation, but they were all actually part of a single vegetable of enormous extent. A narrow channel 10,000 feet wide cut through the rings from the sea between the walls of Pisces and Aries to the inner island.

At the heart of the small island was a 100-mile-wide clearing in the megavegetable. It was covered with sturgeon eggs that had been genetically programed to grow to a diameter of two feet, but never hatch. Inside each egg you could see a tiny sturgeon swimming. A gypsum mountain of translucent alabaster rose up twenty-five miles from the clearing's edge; its polished sides formed a logarithmic spiral that reached 114,048 feet into the air. At the very summit a cloud twisted in toruslike motion, reflecting all

seven colors of the rainbow as it rotated upon its own singularity. From the cloud came flashes of lightning and deafening thunder. Parabolic trajectories of cool, perfumed water arched over the twenty-five miles of sturgeon eggs below to rain gently on the megavegetable.

At the apex of the alabaster mountain rested a geode-shaped nest containing a single egg. No one ever knew what kind of egg it was, although its size was famous throughout the universe. Its transverse axis was exactly one mile and its longitudinal axis was the square root of phi, or 1.272 . . . miles. The large end of the egg was clearly defined as an object in space but at the small end space became continuous with the surface of the egg itself so that it faded like a ghost into nothingness. Through the shell of the egg writhing biological forms could be barely made out, along with the faint green outline of a hexagram that contained a dark flyfoot.

The space disk and its inhabitants became known throughout the universe as the Mystorium. By then the religion was no longer considered an eccentric cult. There were Spacers on every civilized planet, involved in politics, science, and the arts; their contributions were honored everywhere. The Spacers' success rate at problem solving—from the physical to the metaphysical—was unmatched in the annals of history. Many people believed that the Spacers had finally brought the long-awaited New Age into being, which so many previous movements had claimed to have done but without real result. People from all over the universe converted in droves. There was all the time in the universe, and it was all future but all right then. Everywhere were paroxysms of delirious optimism.

With almost every material problem solved, discussions of ideas took place in every part of the universe. With their new unlimited imaginations, people came up with true discoveries concerning the classic problems of priorities of tasks, the unity of knowledge, self-knowledge, and the search for transcendent truth. Although the Spacers participated in these colloquia, they were careful not to dominate. Instead they encouraged other participants, those who excelled as well as those who needed special guidance to trust their own minds even to the point of abandoning truth so that it might grow anew.

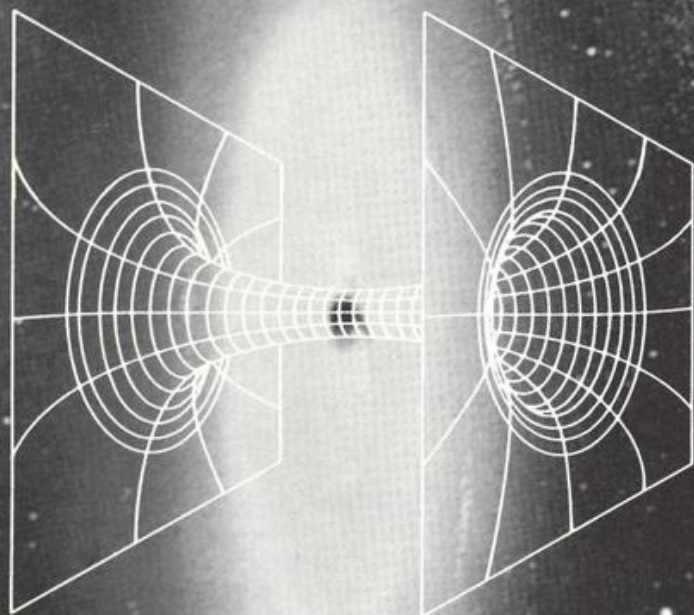
The Spacers then began to concentrate their energies on a new endeavor: the Life Inversing Brotherhood in Time project, L.I.B.I.T. for short. No one paid much attention when a small group of Spacers formed an elite corps of time travelers to represent the Brotherhood. They were called the Black Warriors after the flat black color of their traveling conveyances. Their ships were genetically altered gargantuan tortoises that functioned as time machines and were able to transcend the speed of light. The proportion of the living crafts was based on the golden section, which resulted in a disk with a beveled edge and a large protrusion at the top. These ships were incubated within the sturgeon eggs at the center of the Mysterium. A single tortoise egg was injected into the fish egg, where it was nursed by the miniature sturgeon until it grew large enough to eat the fish. When the tortoise had grown to the limits of the shell the egg would be opened by caesarean surgery, necessary because the tortoise had no appendages to crack the shell. Early in their development the small tortoises did have atavistic heads; however, these dropped off after the sturgeon nurse had been eaten. Once outside the egg the tortoise grew to a diameter of fifty feet. With the addition of some on-board equip-

ment and minor biotechnical adjustments, the tortoise would be ready for service. The Warriors' visits to time periods other than their natural one lead to their being called flying saucers or UFOs.

In these remarkable ships the Black Warriors could travel to any region of the universe and localize without difficulty. The Brotherhood had two tasks to perform. The first was to travel to past times (since the future had effectively been ended) and implant atomic devices in the molecules of individuals to make their offspring think in ways compatible to the Brotherhood. The Warriors were aided in this task by glowing spheres that contained devices capable of topologically mapping the processes of natural creation as if they were languages. The spheres were universal translators. With the Interrozitors, as they were called, all humanoid languages could be understood and the atomic structure of any entity could be altered at will. The Interrozitors were in essence weapons; this was truly a case of the pen being mightier than the sword.

The Brotherhood's second task was non-violent proselytizing. Since their Interrozitors did not function in their natural time, the Spacers relied on conversation to prepare people for their ultimate plan. It had been revealed to the current Spacer Master, Melchizedek XVII, that the universe was real hell and that the only way out of the *tibil* was dimensional transubstantiation. But the Spacers' message was met with aggressive skepticism, annoyance even. All in all, no one paid much attention to the Spacers' apolyptic vision or believed that they could really accomplish their plan to take the entire universe to a higher dimension. So the Spacers were left alone to pursue their program, even when certain facts became obvious.

Flight of three domed discs
photographed in Italy,
September 26, 1960



Natural black holes began to be harvested throughout the universe, but when people noticed that black holes were being moved to one area no one got really upset. There was an old law that set safety standards for the minimum distance between black holes, but over the years it had been routinely violated with no overt consequences. And when astronomical tracking stations began reporting halo effects from the same point in space combined with an exorbitant amount of X-ray emissions, the conference that was planned to investigate was called with no particular urgency. Even when Relpek, the renowned astronomer and inventor of sidereal astrology, publicly announced that ten percent of the matter of the universe was missing, most dismissed him as having gone "crazy as a Spacer." Meanwhile, an impenetrable time dilation developed around the Mysterium. Still the comments were along the lines of "Good! Those Spacers should be locked up." A disenchanted Spacer who had escaped the time dilation spread the word that Melchizedek XVII had died when he single-handedly cracked open the famous egg on top of the alabaster mountain, causing all the collected black holes to coalesce into the hoped-for toroidal hypersphere.

When the day of the astronomical conference arrived, it seemed that Relpek had been banned. He and a small band of followers were demonstrating outside the conference center, demanding to be heard. He was surprised when an official signaled security to let him pass and even more surprised to learn that he would speak first. He spoke with zeal and passion. His point was the same: ten percent of the universe was missing and the situation could be grave. The reaction was mixed and the next speaker was called. The second astronomer declared that Relpek was wrong. He had erred: to date not ten, but

sixteen, percent of the universe was missing and the number rising. The audience sat in stunned silence. Then panic broke out.

Over the next few months no one knew what to do. Anything and everything was blamed for the dwindling condition of the universe. It didn't take long for the growing wrath to focus on the Spacers, although there were very few left. Most had died during the formation of the hypersphere; those who hadn't were publicly disemboweled and their carcasses hung from space hooks.

Others felt that the time machine itself was the culprit that had precipitated the disaster. Nursing mothers with babes in arms cried, "We are sick and tired of the never-ending now. Give us back the future" as they hurled bombs through the windows of shops selling the latest models of time viewers, time belts, and time vehicles. Across the vast reaches of the universe billions of public time-tunnel systems were destroyed. And matter was still being eaten up at an alarming logarithmic rate. The Nocturnal Council was formed to oversee emergency evacuation procedures. Old-fashioned star ships moved people to the more remote parts of the universe in a desperate Noah's-ark effort to escape the ever-devouring hypersphere. People were unceremoniously deposited on barren planets with little more than their wits to survive. In what remained of the urban areas a stopgap plan was devised to feed the hypersphere space debris, which eventually meant any satellite, planet, quasar, or nebula that could be spared. Even the remaining time machines failed to buy time because the hypersphere, as a fifth- to fourth-dimensional entity, could match and exceed the time creation output of any humanoid-made machine.

When the fifty percent mark was reached, most people just gave up hope. Mass suicide pacts were formed and at the same time the euphoria that comes with final resignation gave rise to a mood of macabre festivity. Bizarre forms of necrophilia broke out. Within a short time what was left of the universe resembled a cross between a Halloween party and an evangelical revival meeting. Swings between exultation and nihilism were so extreme that nearly all of those not driven mad died. Yet there were a number of souls (like the famed narrator of "A Descent into the Maelstrom" by the old-world writer Edgar Allan Poe) for whom the white heat of despair forged a clarity of consciousness few ever attain under any circumstances. Relpek was one of these. He felt he could do something. He built a laboratory entirely of time machines: floors, ceilings, and walls. It was a last-ditch time buffer to the reality of what was happening outside.

Relpek had remembered that the history of the Spacers told of how Melchizedek I (or the mere subject in a primitive lab test who would come to be Melchizedek) had drawn up plans for a device that could cause anything never to have existed. He thought it was called the Nihilatron. If such a device could be built it just might stop the hypersphere. But, reasoned one of his colleagues, wouldn't it also cause the universe never to have existed? Relpek retorted that that seemed to be about to happen in any case. If a localizer mechanism could be invented to limit the effects of the Nihilatron there might just be a chance of saving what was left to save of the universe. The plans were discovered in an obscure museum of unusual phenomena dedicated to the memory of Charles Fort. Ironically, the one who discovered the plans was the last living Spacer, who had escaped execution by hiding out

during the terror. He wanted to do his part to redeem the universe.

Working side by side with the last Spacer, Relpek and his crew of eleven built the Nihilatron. Its main device was a tulpodial causality distorter. The first tests were only partially successful, but Relpek considered the partial failures a good sign because they meant that a localizer might not be needed. One thing was certain: without a localizer, someone would have to be in the immediate vicinity of the device just to operate it.

It was the end of a long day and they all decided to sleep on the problem, even though there was hardly time to. The universe was now eighty percent gone. In the middle of the night the Spacer woke up sweating from a troubled sleep, in a fit of guilt. Without a moment's hesitation he quietly went to the laboratory and picked up the Nihilatron, stole a rocket ship, and was soon headed straight for the hypersphere. With one hand on the Nihilatron dials and the other in the air making the sign of the flyfot, he dove the rocket with its captain and cargo directly into the heart of the hypersphere.

When Relpek awoke he rushed into the laboratory. He had the solution. Puzzled by the missing Nihilatron, he was astonished to learn from the ad hoc news vine that the hypersphere was gone and that the ten percent left of the universe was positioning itself in random spirals throughout space. It was only when he could not find his friend the Spacer that he realized what had happened.

The Nocturnal Council immediately began planning to have everyone left alive in the Bauharoque transported by time machine to a future that had a future, the Neo-Gotick period. But before they left their time

Relpek made two more suggestions: first, that this period in history be time locked forever so that no one could enter it again, and second, that the end of the twentieth century be given back the five years it had lost in the memory of the last Spacer. "Those are both excellent suggestions," said the Nocturnal chairperson, "I only hope that the time sensors from the newly created future do not punish us by stopping us in mid . . ."



Mate, When Worlds Collide

[illegible]



The artist lecturing at the Thanaton II celebration, December 31, 1988.
(Extraterrestrials often appear as ghostlike forms or diaphanous amoebae
surrounding the person being contacted.) Photo: Steve Moskowitz

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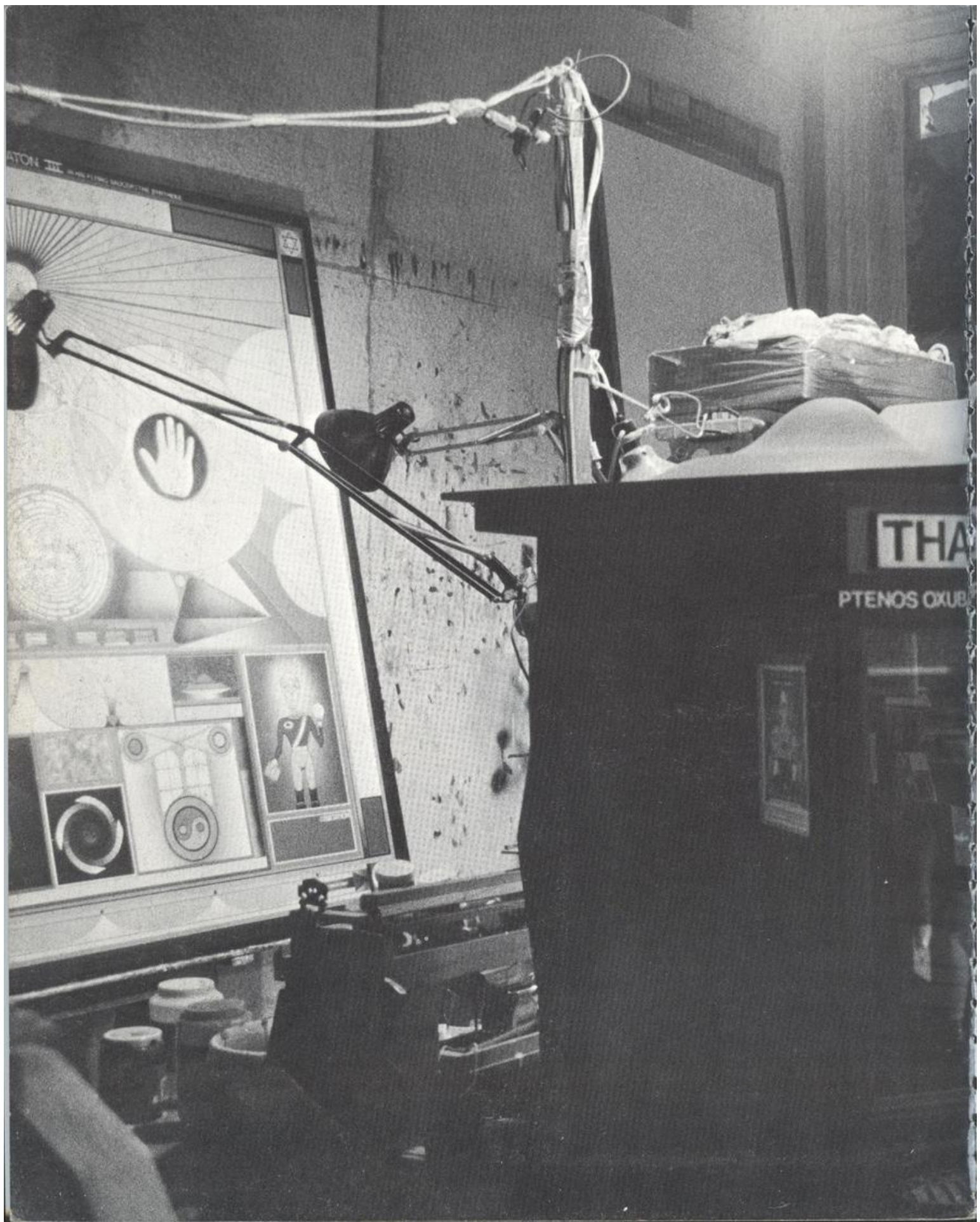
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Grand Rapids Art Museum, Grand Rapids, Michigan
Tufts New England Medical Center, Boston





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